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SOCIALIST JOURNALISM

AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW'S format has again changed. It aims to live up to the title of Review by containing regular sections on Contemporary Marxist Theory; World Socialism; The Australian Working Class Movement; Australian Socialist History; Australian Literature and the Arts; Book Reviews and Comment and Criticism from readers. In future issues we hope to bring readers translations of Marighela, Peredo, Colletti and Del Pra in the section on theory; to include interviews with and articles by leading trade unionists and the rank and file of the working class, who provide the backbone of any socialist movement; to include in the section on socialist history further first-person accounts by socialists and communists which will cover experiences in the IWW here and overseas, the early socialist and communist parties of Australia, and the Spanish civil war; and, to have review articles of recent books on or by Gramsci, Althusser, Lukacs, Marek and Guerin as well as works on the socialist movement in Australia.

The new format and content of the ALR are no cause for self-congratulation. They indicate that once again the journal is attempting a redefinition of its role; something which it has done several times in its history as the linear descendant of the Proletarian Review formed by Guido Baracchi and Percy Laidler in Melbourne in 1920. Since that time, sometimes at the behest of agencies whose ulterior motives were not clearly a desire for the
conversion of the Australian worker to socialism, the journal has
sportied the name, Proletarian, Communist, Labour Review and
Communist Review. Each change of name indicated a change of
orientation and purpose. None resulted in a significant alteration
in the circulation or status of the journal as an oppositional organ.
While it has succeeded in maintaining its position as the widest-
selling left journal in Australia, and, indeed, the only journal read
in any numbers by the blue collar working class, it has never made
coment on the state of Australian society or anything else which
is sufficiently pertinent to win it even the begrudged status of a
devil’s advocate among people who are not socialists but who want
to get the best account of what is going on. Technical reasons
like the fact that we cannot obtain outlets in a retail market
dominated by reaction only partly explain this failure. We must
look first to ourselves and the journal itself for our failure. What
follows is put forward as the partial and perhaps inadequate first
step in the reappraisal, and implicit self-criticin, of the role of
socialist journalism in Australia, and particularly what this journal
should aim to do. By themselves these proposals are merely a
thesis: the really valuable proposals can come only as a result
of extensive antithetical or supporting comment and criticism from
readers, from which we can extract a synthetic policy. We appeal
to readers and especially to working class readers to send comment
and criticism to the editors on the proposals which follow. Only
thus can we tie down our speculation to the real needs of Australia
and its workers, eliminating what is irrelevant to the ongoing needs
of socialist revolutionary struggle, and retaining what is of value.

The Leninist Model

Lenin’s and Gramsci’s extensive writings on the role of socialist
journalism can serve as our starting point, without in any sense
being binding upon us as models. Indeed, both men would have
been horrified at any notion that their ideas should be automatically
transferred in their entirety to a completely different situation.

For Gramsci the role of all socialist journals was to raise men’s
understanding of their social being from the level of common
sense to the level of philosophy; from an incoherent and frequently
internally self-contradictory world view to a coherent world view,
which both explained the relationship between society and the
individual and indicated how it could be ameliorated.

For Lenin the role was something more “... not limited
solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and
to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a
collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a
collective organiser”. Lenin’s notion of the organisational function
of a newspaper is different from Gramsci’s notion that newspapers should work together under direction from a single homogeneous centre according to a strict division of labor and tend to involve more and more people in the activity of running the newspaper. The difference is clearer when we look at the actual task each man faced, rather than when we juxtapose “Where to Begin?” and What is to be Done? against the relevant sections of Gli Intellettuali and Letteratura e Vita Nazionale.

Lenin faced a situation which was so revolutionary that the slightest spark could “fan . . . class struggle and popular indignation into a general conflagration”; where the pressing need of the moment “. . . when interest in politics and questions of socialism has been aroused among the broadest strata of the population . . .” was constant organisational and strategical agitation and propaganda and where “the plan for an all-Russian political newspaper far from representing the fruits of the labor of armchair workers, infected with dogmatism and literariness . . . . is a most practical plan for immediate and allround preparations for the uprising, while at the same time never for a moment forgetting our ordinary everyday work”.

Gramsci writing from prison in a situation of defeat for socialism and rule by fascism, foresaw a long struggle to break the capitalist hegemony over minds — no Spark was going to cause a general conflagration in Italy in the early thirties. He warned that “changes in the mode of thinking, in beliefs, in opinions, do not come about through rapid ‘explosions’ which are simultaneous and general, they come about almost always through ‘successive combinations’ according to the most disparate and uncontrollable formulae of ‘authority’”; and went on to say that realistic journalism should bear in mind the nature of its public and try to establish with exactness the various levels of culture accessible to different types of readers and therefore grade and distinguish its publications (this reading of Gramsci has been contested but it was maintained by Vasoli at the most recent Congress of Gramscian Studies); and that the function of a journal was primarily educative.

The difference in their proposals stemmed from a diverse estimation of the degree of revolutionary consciousness in the masses. In Lenin’s case the bulk of the masses were already against the status quo and desirous of major social change, and, therefore were ready for persuasive direction about how to introduce this change, where in Gramsci’s case they neither wanted socialism, nor did they see in major social changes the solution to their problems and had to be convinced that they needed these first, before (on a notional not a temporal level) they would proceed to strategic and organisational issues. This distinction sins by oversimplifi-
cation; both writers recognised that education and organisation went hand in hand, indeed, for Gramsci's scheme they were interdependent, but we cannot ignore the difference of emphasis determined by the different degree of revolutionary consciousness they faced, summed up in the names of their journals: Lenin had the Spark; Gramsci had the Citta Futura, Ordine Nuovo and Lo Stato Operaio (The Future City, The New Order and The Worker's State).

What we must extract are the generalisations which are common to both and possibly relevant to the role of a socialist journal in Australia. Both maintain: 1) that the prevailing socio-economic and political conditions (which include the degree of desire for revolution in the mass) should determine the program a journal should adopt; 2) that a correct estimation of the degree of revolutionary consciousness of the potential readership should determine the nature of its content; 3) that the best way of ensuring the effectiveness of 2) was to try to make as many readers as possible collaborators engaged in genuinely common work, exchange of material, experience and forces; and 4) that the journal was never more than one aspect of revolutionary activity besides which there had to be active work.

The object of both Lenin's and Gramsci's journals was education (either how to organise or how to understand society) and never merely information (which suggests that the subtitle of ALR "a marxist journal of information, analysis and discussion... for the promotion of socialist ideas" is appropriate provided we consider the last phrase as paramount). Neither understood by education the Platonic notion prevalent in universities today, and, sadly, among many socialists too, according to which the intellectuals of the movement, like philosopher kings, alone are able to reach into the receptacle of knowledge about how the world runs and then distribute it to the masses who are unable to understand the esoterica of marxism wherein all truth lies. Both Lenin and Gramsci thought of education as a circular process whereby the generalisations (philosophy) which were promulgated as theory by the journal were merely the obverse of the multitudinous particular experiences lived by men.

I suggest that the first fundamental proposal for ALR which we can derive from these two writers is that the mass of its readers, especially the names we have not heard of, start to write for it, and thus supply it with a basis of real attitudes and real problems on which to build a coherent and systematic mode of thought which is relevant to Australians. Many readers may feel that they have nothing to say or contribute, or that they are not competent to write for the journal. They would probably be surprised to discover that the everyday facts about their lives and
work, which, because they live them, they think everybody must know, are unknown to other people. It is not a case of the intellectuals not knowing how the other half lives, but of practically nobody knowing how anybody lives outside their circle. From my experience I know that it is a salutary experience for intellectual leftists to go in search of Australia—all too often Melbourne intellectual circles become so ingrown that they think that the universities, the Carlton commune, two or three uni pubs and Arena are Australia. This sort of limitation goes for trade unionists, teachers, old age pensioners and the myriad other groups. Few transcend their own limited particularism. So we appeal to everyone to follow Gorky’s admonition that every man should write his autobiography. Our readers should write articles about the social problems of their occupations so that trade unionists should understand students, old age pensioners should understand teachers and migrants understand aborigines and so on. We are all appallingly ignorant of what goes on in this society, and ignorance is no starting point for a theory of socialist action.

Of course, not all the material the journal receives will be published. It will have to be sifted and only the best, the most enlightening particular cases, or those which appear to illustrate problems which the inflow of material has indicated are common to many, will appear as they were originally written—the rest may be chopped up and used in part or incorporated in the more general articles which the editors themselves write. In turn a limited group, the editorial board, will have to do the sifting. There are not only practical reasons for selective use of material (like the limited amount of type space we have) and a selected group doing the sifting, but the fundamental ideological rule that the journal must at all times avoid becoming a vehicle for populist attitudes. Its object is to homogenise in an organic fashion the raw material of experience which the mass of its readers send to it in their articles and letters, in order to create a coherent line in which the raw material of common sense is raised to the level of a marxist philosophy of life, on which a programme of action can be built. And this in turn explains why the journal must be controlled by a limited homogeneous group which sees eye to eye and which can thrash out a general line in response to the material they receive. Moreover, it explains why the bulk of the journal should be written by regular contributors, who synthesise the lessons about life which the general readers’ correspondence has taught them. Too many cooks would not only spoil this broth but would make it so thin and diffuse that no coherent synthetic philosophy could be offered back to the readers by their co-dialoguers (the editors) for their approval, amendment or rejection.
This brings me to an examination of the role of ALR in the context of Australian socialist journalism. If Lenin's envisaged audience was homogeneous in its opposition to the status quo and therefore had one basic organ, Iskra or Vperyod, Gramsci envisaged for advanced capitalist society a number of disparate audiences all at different levels of cultural preparation and revolutionary consciousness. His optimum situation was one where a number of journals catered for different audiences and where there was a planned division of labor along these lines. Each journal, depending on its aim and its audience, would have the appropriate content and speak the "appropriate language". He warned against assuming that because there should be a homogeneous directive centre, all journals should present a homogeneous content, irrespective of their audience. A journal full of high Marxist esoterica is incomprehensible to most people, indeed, I suspect it is often incomprehensible to its authors.

Of course, it is possible for Australian Left Review to work out a division of labor with Tribune, but many of the other important journals of the left in Australia may be hostile to the notion that there should be a division of labor, either because they think that they have the monopoly of the truth, or that we are untrustworthy. We should still work towards an agreement about a division of labor. I suggest that in the meantime because of its superior links with the blue collar working class movement, ALR would be most suitable in the role of the middle sort of journal, the link journal between mass opinion and intellectual synthesis. Gramsci defined this sort of journal as the "critical-historical-bibliographical" source which sought its readership among non-specialised readers, who were, however interested in coming to grips with cultural matters. Without demanding that we subscribe too much to his lengthy suggestions about the style of this type of journal, it is worthwhile noting that he laid stress on the need for clarity of exposition and bore in mind the difficulty of conveying philosophic concepts in everyday language. The readers must understand the contents — or it is a failure.

Finally, the fundamental problem of every periodical (daily or not) is to secure stable sales (if possible growing continually).... Certainly the fundamental problem in the fortunes of a periodical is one of ideology, that is, the fact that it satisfies determined political and intellectual needs or not. But it would be a gross mistake to believe that this is the sole element and especially that it is valid when taken "by itself". We should take particular notice of this suggestion — a "correct" line which has no readers is useless, what we have to find is the line which is correct and which the readers think is correct.
What overall effect will the actions of the Federal ALP Executive in Victoria and NSW have upon the ALP?

Dr. Jim Cairns: It is not yet possible to say what overall effect the actions of the Federal ALP Executive in Victoria and NSW will have upon the ALP. In each State a group — called ‘right’ in NSW and ‘left’ in Victoria — had obtained control of the Branch and was unwilling to give a fair go to those who disagreed with them. The position was worse in NSW, but the Federal Executive acted as if it was worse in Victoria. At present it appears that more change as a result of Federal Executive action will take place in Victoria than in NSW. The position in NSW is still very obscure. But in Victoria it is likely that the ‘left’ wing group, which had full control before September 1970, will perhaps have a majority in 1971 but that others will share perhaps as much as 45 per cent of the elected offices.

Mr. Bill Hartley: You have to answer the question differently for each State. In NSW there was no meaningful intervention. I don’t see any substantial changes occurring in that State. Undoubtedly the system of proportional representation will give the so-called left faction minority representation in NSW. The only thing that is clearly apparent in the differences in the situation in New South Wales and Victoria is that in NSW whatever action was taken, and it was quite limited, was taken for a very good reason in the face of very serious complaints, while in Victoria it was taken for very little or no reason on the basis of complaints which didn’t have any substance in fact.

I think one of the most fundamental outcomes of the intervention

This interview was conducted by ALR in March.
Dr. Cairns was a member of the Advisory Council established by the Federal Executive in Victoria after Federal intervention in that State.
Bill Hartley is the former State Secretary and member of the dismissed State Executive, and a prominent member of the Socialist Left in the Labor Party in Victoria.
in Victoria has been that it has released a number of people who were associated with the left wing in the past to re-think the future of the party in ideological terms. It has led to the development of the socialist left. Of course, it has also led to a fundamental re-grouping in this State. It has indicated some shortcomings in the previous Victorian Executives which were prisoners of the system of the limitations imposed on it by being tied substantially to the interests of fairly conservative parliamentary parties.

A number of members of the Executive who previously had left wing associations have collaborated in securing intervention, others by their acquiescence have allowed intervention to work. It is obvious that out of this there is going to be a fundamental reassessment of the position of the most active Labor Party people in Victoria. Out of it will grow an effective socialist force although I doubt whether it will initially be a majority force in the Victorian ALP.

Do you see prospects for further splits in the ALP? Will the strongly differentiated groupings in the ALP, assisted by the provision for proportional representation, lead to entrenched factional activities making further splits more likely?

Cairns:
Proportional representation will not create factions; it will allow factions to have representation. Splits are not a result of factions; they are a result of a situation in which factions are kept apart and cannot meet together to have to argue out their positions within the constitutional framework, or they are the result of a total absence of representation of one faction. It appears likely that proportional voting, allowing the factions to be represented, will create a situation in which the factions can meet and argue out their positions. I would expect that factions will continue but that splits would be less likely. Splits, however, are inevitable if differences between factions are irreconcilable. Should a situation arise where differences are irreconcilable then no system, proportional or otherwise, will prevent splits. My experience is that differences are more often the result of personalities and personal group loyalties than they are the result of differences over ideology or principle.

Hartley:
Factional activities, of course, have always been characteristic of the Australian Labor Party. The ALP is a broad coalition of
various forces who for various reasons associate with the labor movement. But I think we have to look at the character of proportional representation voting. It is likely to lead to a proliferation of groupings in the party and it is not necessary for various factions to make their alliances in advance. My own view, and I'm quite closely associated with the socialist left, is that we ought to be an independent group taking pretty much a vanguard political line and creating a frame of reference whereby the others have all got to make up their minds whether they are going to support us or not. There is a likelihood of not two groupings, but of several groupings under this system in the two States where it is going to apply. I don't think that this necessarily means that it is going to heighten the prospect in the future of splits in the ALP. What it will do is to make it even more clear to the public and the electorate at large there is a fairly solid disparity of viewpoints in the party.

What prospects are there for the ALP left wing to win the leadership of the ALP Federally, and what policy differences do you think would be likely to eventuate if this occurred?

Cairns:
The ALP left wing has a very good chance of winning Federal Conference and Executive leadership of the ALP. Among the changes in policy this would bring are:

1. An end to the principle that the US alliance is crucial, and a beginning of support for the 'human rights' revolution around the world most often expressed in the national liberation movements.

2. Positive economic institutions under the control of parliament would be developed.

3. Emphasis would be given to workers' democracy, student democracy and many other forms of democratic government within economic and social groupings would take place. Trade unions would become more democratically active and far less bureaucratic.

4. New emphasis would be given to civil rights — freedom to think, speak, write and behave culturally. In some instances the government would assist people to inquire and research and to publish far in advance of anything contemplated up to now. This would mean a curtailment of the powers of security and other police engaged in political or cultural intimidation and restriction and of magistrates, many of whom possess no judicial qualities at all and are merely policemen without a uniform.
I can't see that there is a very good prospect of anyone taking a strong socialist position winning leadership of the Federal Parliamentary ALP. But there is a prospect for an influential socialist point of view to continue to have some influence in the party, although it is at a fairly low ebb at the moment, particularly within the Parliamentary party, and it may take us time to regain influence. Nevertheless I think that the dynamic lies with the left; it is quite capable of putting forward policy alternatives which will have a great deal of appeal.

Do you regard the ALP as a vehicle for socialist change in Australia?

I regard the ALP as a vehicle for socialist change in Australia. This involves many things but among them are the fact that if it is a vehicle for socialist change then it must not be alone a party campaigning for support of those whose opinions are taken as they exist. It must also be a party to educate and change opinion towards socialism. Socialism is, of course, not what happens when a group of people who call themselves, or who are, Marxists obtain power, nor is it the control of the economy by the State. Socialism is a high level of democracy in each and every economic and social unit of which the society concerned consists. Socialism can be won by winning democracy in each of these units and by socialists winning power in the State.

But both social democrats and Leninists have made the mistake of believing that all they need to do to establish socialism is to win control of the State. If social democrats do this, merely by winning elections, they will have very little power at all because most of the power which they will have to deal with is in the economy and not in the State. If Leninists merely determine to win control of the State in advanced capitalism by revolution, it is highly improbably that they will win in any foreseeable time or circumstances. Socialism has to be worked for and won in the factories, schools, universities and everywhere where decisions are made which affect the lives of our people.

A vehicle for socialist change may be going a little too far in some respects, but looking at other parties in the political spectrum that are not functioning as parliamentary parties, like the Communist Party say, one has to evaluate whether it would be more
useful to be a genuine socialist party or be within a parliamentary structure as a socialist wing. One would have to create a list of debits and credits to see whether it would be more effective to occupy a forward position without parliamentary representation or to function within a mass party like the ALP. People in the ALP have considered from time to time whether or not a left party of a vanguard type would be effective. But I think the general decision which has been made is to work within the structure of a party geared predominantly to the parliamentary system and to change its priorities.

As socialists, do you consider that revolutionary changes are necessary in Australia in order to establish a socialist society?

Cairns:
To establish socialism in Australia a revolution would be necessary, but the belief that socialism can be established in Australia by force is utopian and mistaken. Contemporary Australian society is so acquisitive, violent and uncooperative that the change necessary to establish socialism would be so great that it could not be other than revolutionary. But socialism could not be established quickly by force. In the event of some quick change of State power by force there would be little change in the mass of the people and in society. It would still be the same society and it would have to be changed afterwards. The danger would be that any group that would obtain power by force quickly would not be capable of changing society into a humane, free, cooperative one. It is better not to take the risk and to work for socialist changes in every organ of society every day of our lives.

Hartley:
Of course the answer to that is yes. In context it is necessary to define what one would mean by revolutionary changes. Our commitment is to peace, democracy and socialism and using democratic connotation we would be looking for the sort of revolution that would have a popular electoral basis and would not be a revolution of a military or a violent type which could result in a dictatorship of the proletariat. I would be looking to the sort of revolutionary changes which would set up in Australia, as the result of fairly extensive nationalisation of some of the major private enterprises in the country domestically and overseas owned, a very considerable public sector of activity where most of the socially useful role of industry would be allocated. There would be room for a continuing private sector in Australia as well, and there would be room for a third sector with a fusion of both public
and private participation. However it is necessary to look at an extensive program of nationalisation, not necessarily of expropriation, but I think ways can be found to fund the takeover of enterprises, particularly foreign enterprises in Australia, which don’t make an immediate drain on our capital resources. It is going to be very necessary too to adopt a fundamental attitude to some of the problems of society, like pollution, housing, transport and urban planning.

In the foreign policy field I feel that there can almost be a complete revolution in thinking. Socialists in the party have got to specifically contest any policy set-up whereby we give any allegiance at all to the American line, particularly in view of their continuing role in Asia. I think that we have to be explicitly anti-imperialist both in the military and economic sense and that this has to be articulated. I think that the whole field of Government policy and administration, particularly in most of the areas of federal jurisdiction, are capable of being virtually turned about in order to establish a more socially useful government, as an aim to obtaining a more socialist orientated society. Yes, what we would be envisaging is basically a revolution although a democratic revolution in this country.

What do you think is the reason why a majority of young radicals and activists are rejecting the traditional parliamentary parties?

Cairns:

In the past a great deal of emphasis has been placed upon Parliament (especially the State, and it is easy to think of Parliament or the Government as the State) as the sole or main base of power. This emphasis has been given as much by Marxist-Leninists as by social democrats. They have differed mainly about how they would get control of the State.

In recent years it has again been realised that the State in an advanced capitalist economy is only one of the bases of power, and if it is ‘taken over’ and the other power bases left as they are, they will be able to neutralise or throw out those who have taken over the State, especially if it is through traditional parliamentary methods. It is of vast importance to realise that the State in an advanced capitalist economy is not the only or main base of power and that if power is to be won it has to be won in many places not just in the State. But the reaction of the young radicals and activists has gone much too far. They correctly see that the State is not the only or main base of power but they are acting now as if it had no power at all. It is of great importance
to see that as many socialists as possible go into Parliaments and win control of the State if they can. It is a serious mistake to think that the State can be smashed, or power won in the streets by almost unarmed people with no experience or inclination for fighting. It is of vast importance to advance socialist thinking and socialist power everywhere, continuously and, of course, the State or Parliament or the Government must be one of those places.

Hartley:
I think that resistance to the established parliamentary parties goes further than even the majority of the young radicals. There are fairly active signs that the community generally is dissatisfied with the form and character of the established parties and this is indicated by the substantial votes for the minority parties in recent elections. This pattern has been building up over the past two or three years.

On the specific questions of the young radicals and activists, it isn't easy for somebody like myself to tune in completely with their thinking. I consider myself fairly radical and socialistically orientated, but I am continually surprised by the whole nature of their dialogue and the very fundamental nature of their approach to society. It is sometimes even difficult for older people to understand just precisely what they have in mind for society in general or for the re-organisation of universities, but it is pretty clear that they are re-thinking things in very fundamental terms and that the traditional parliamentary parties certainly are not satisfying them. Of course they are entitled to be very cynical about the role of politicians and parliamentary parties. They believe direct action is going to achieve results of a more relevant character than may be obtainable through the more traditional means, either through the ballot box or in the parliaments. I think too, that the Vietnam war has affected very greatly the thinking of young people and particularly young students who are informed about the issues involved in Indo-China. Certainly they are dissatisfied with the performances of their government over the issue of Vietnam, and I think that they are very dissatisfied with the backing and filling of parties like the ALP on the issue.

However I believe that in the left of the Labor Party within the broad coalition which is the ALP there is effective room for real work which may influence the course of community, social and government action. I hope that the Labor Party could be regarded as having its doors open to the left and to everybody who wants to put a radical viewpoint, and particularly the students, and the younger radicals in society. I don't think we can finally answer that question until we can see the course of the development which started in Victoria.
AN INTENSE DEBATE is going on among a section of the activists in the anti-war movement. A notable feature of this debate is that it is confined to those activists who regard themselves as revolutionaries. The vast number of followers and supporters of the anti-war movement remain untouched by it. The debate centres around the aims and main slogans of the Moratorium movement. But in fact underlying it are differing concepts about the nature of the anti-war movement and about the movement for social change.

One group argues that as the Australian anti-war movement is part of the world-wide struggle against imperialism it ought to proclaim clear-cut anti-imperialist aims and that the movement should be rallied under an anti-US imperialist slogan. This group claims that anything less is an unprincipled concession to liberal and pacifist views of the war and betrayal of the whole movement. The people who express these views claim that they occupy the most "revolutionary" and most "advanced" position. They are scornful of all those who contest this view, describing them as weak, revisionist, even as "objectively serving the interests of US imperialism".

At a time when many people, and particularly young people, are becoming radicalised as a result of continuing war in Indo-China, when many of them come to recognise the imperialist nature of this war and are beginning to question the society which makes such wars possible, the seemingly simple and direct solutions offered by these "instant" revolutionaries have a certain initial attraction. They seem to offer a quick, clear-cut, straightforward recipe for revolution. Those who are new to the revolutionary movement who have little or no contact with the working class movement and have not seriously studied the experiences of revolution can be attracted to the simple, revolutionary catch-phrase which is so often a substitute for a serious marxist analysis and for the complex task of elaborating a revolutionary strategy and tactics. Few have been more scornful of revolutionary phrase-mongering than Lenin who talked about "the revolutionary phrase" that "might ruin our revolution". "The slogans are superb, alluring, intoxicating, but there are no grounds for them, such is the nature of the revolutionary phrase." Lenin, February 1918.

Bernie Taft is Victorian President of the Communist Party of Australia.
All revolutionaries, new and old, need to seriously examine the issues involved in that debate and what underlies them. The anti-war movement is an extra-parliamentary mass movement which includes people with a great diversity of views and attitudes and independent of any political party. It is a voluntary coalition of differing forces. The common factor is the opposition to the war in Vietnam. It includes both supporters and opponents of the present social system. It includes revolutionaries, reformists, pacifists, humanitarians, liberals and a lot of people who don't fit into any of these categories.

People have been aroused, and continue to be aroused by the war in Vietnam. Some are aroused by the heroism of the Vietnamese people, others by the cruelty and barbarism, by the torture and destruction as the rulers of a big nation try to impose their will on a small nation. Many people have been aroused on humanitarian grounds, some have gone further to a criticism of the system that produced the Vietnam war and keeps it going. Some have come to see the hypocrisy of our own system, the lies of our rulers, the distortions and biased propaganda of our mass media and the manipulation of our society. But there are many others who think the war is unwise—a mistake, and those who are as yet only vaguely opposed to the war. There are people here, as in the United States, who support our social system but who are opposed to the war because it is dividing our society and alienating some of the young, and making enemies for us among the people in Asia.

In short, people are drawn into this movement for a great variety of reasons, with different attitudes and different levels of understanding. This is the inevitable nature of a mass movement of this character. This is quite different from a political party of likeminded people with an all-embracing political program. Do we support such a broad movement operating on the basis that there is no exclusion of any group opposed to the war in Vietnam and no domination of any one group or trend—or do we believe that the movement should be confined to revolutionaries only (perhaps only those of the "right" brand)?

Is that what some people want? If so, let them openly say so. We don't agree with this. We think it is a good thing that all the forces genuinely opposed to the war in Vietnam should combine in a common effort to arouse our people, many of whom are still apathetic, in order to reach the stage where we can enforce our demands on the rulers of our country. We aim for the movement to reach such a level that it becomes too difficult, too costly for our rulers to continue the present policies. That is
why we believe that to impose anti-imperialist aims on the whole movement would limit and narrow the movement and would restrict its ability to grow and attract new forces.

This is quite different from the question of the role that revolutionaries should play inside the broad movement. Revolutionaries have the responsibility to present their own views to explain and win support for their anti-imperialist analysis and demands, that is to carry out effective revolutionary work.

It is precisely in conditions where the movement opens its doors widely to people who want to do something about the war in Vietnam, when it invites people to join it, that the most favourable conditions for the propagation of revolutionary ideas are created. When people get involved in the movement, when they are active, that is when they want to learn new things, that is when they begin to ask questions about the nature of the war in Vietnam, our government’s policy and the nature of our society. Revolutionaries should welcome these favourable conditions for teaching these activists more about the role of imperialism and the nature of our society. This is the way revolutionaries should act. This is the way in which the successful revolutionaries of Russia and China acted.

Imposing anti-imperialist aims on the Moratorium movement would limit its appeal and would in fact seriously reduce the scope for effective revolutionary mass work in the anti-war movement. It would put up an unnecessary barrier to the entry of people into the movement. It would in fact demand of people that they should understand before they join the movement, that the war in Vietnam is a product of imperialism — instead of teaching them when they are in the movement. Despite the militant-sounding posture, this attitude in fact reduces the scope for the revolutionaries to effectively explain the issues in this war and to teach people what lies behind it and about the nature of our social system.

The main slogan of the movement at this stage should be a slogan that leads the whole movement forward. It must be effective, it should concentrate on the enemy’s weakest spot. It must be a slogan that the enemy cannot absorb, integrate or render harmless. It must be a slogan that can rally people into action, that can attract new forces. To do all this it must be concrete and seem capable of realisation. To be effective a slogan must be logical, sensible, yet strike at the system.

At this stage, the demand for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the total US and allied military presence from Indo-China is such a demand. It is a slogan that is quite clear, and can be understood by everybody. It is a concrete demand
on our government that all Australian troops, naval and air forces with all their military equipment be immediately withdrawn from Indo-China. Yet it strikes at the very nerve centre of our enemy. A total ending of allied military presence would lead to a victory of the people of Indo-China. It is not a slogan that can be absorbed. It has nothing in common with Nixon’s phoney “withdrawal” of some US troops.

In Russia in 1917 the slogan “Peace, Land and Bread” was of the same nature: concrete, sensible, yet it struck at the heart of the system, it could not be absorbed. Compare this to the “Smash Imperialism” slogan! How does one smash imperialism in Australia at this moment? How does one gain mass support for such a generalised call? What are people asked to do? On the face of it the “Smash Imperialism” slogan appears far more revolutionary than the “Peace, Land and Bread” or the “All Power to the Soviets” slogans that led the masses into the October Revolution.

What makes this so serious is its effect on the position of the Australian workers. It is generally agreed that the whole anti-war movement must direct its activities towards raising working class consciousness and activities in opposition to the war in Vietnam. Yet we know about the difficulties of mobilising the workers and overcoming existing apathy. Does anybody really imagine that slogans such as “Smash Imperialism” make this task easier? By contrast the slogan “Stop Work to Stop the War” is an example of the type of slogan that is concrete, realistic, yet effective, and that can rally mass support.

It is not out of place to ask that in addition to noting the experiences of the Russian and Chinese revolutions on the matter of revolutionary slogans, some attention be paid to the views of the people who are doing the fighting in Vietnam. Mme. Nguyen Thi Binh, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Head of the Delegation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam to the Paris Conference on Vietnam, had this to say in her message to the Anti-War Conference:

... we urgently appeal to all peace and justice-loving people throughout the world and to the eminent delegates to this National Anti-war Conference to undertake urgent action in demanding that the United States immediately end their aggression and adventurous war activities:

Rapidly withdraw their troops and those of other foreign countries in their camp from South Vietnam and Indochina so as to enable the South Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian people to decide their own affairs without foreign interference:

That Australian troops should be withdrawn from South Vietnam in the common interests of the Australian and Vietnamese peoples and in the interests of friendship between our two peoples.

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Advanced Action

Similar differences are apparent in an evaluation of the role of "advanced actions". We believe that advanced actions play a vital role in the anti-war movement. A vanguard, which will always be a small minority, is essential to inspire and to advance the whole movement, to deepen the understanding of all participants and supporters. The seamen refusing to sail the Jeparit or the inspiring effort of the draft resisters are outstanding examples. Some advanced actions are essential. The broad movement on its own, without a vanguard, can be absorbed or turned into safe channels. But the vanguard must not be isolated. This is always the aim of the ruling class, of the opponents of the anti-war movement. Advanced action must always be connected with and part of mass activities. It can never be a substitute for mass action. The idea, propagated by some, that all advanced actions are positive, irrespective of conditions or of their effect on the broad movement is a simplistic and dangerous view.

The differences on tactics, slogans and on the direction of the movement can be traced back and understood in terms of differences about the objectives of the movement. We Communists have a dual or two-fold objective which we state openly and pursue within the movement.

1. To end this war, to stop the aggression, for the right of the Vietnamese people for independence and to determine their own future.

The Vietnam war is pursued by the American imperialists to teach the people of Asia and South America a stern lesson — not to rise in revolt against their foreign oppressors. They want to demonstrate to all oppressed people that they can't succeed in their revolt. That is why the Americans are hanging on so tenaciously despite their difficulties at home and the problems the Vietnam war has created for the American rulers. Conversely, a victory for the Vietnamese people and a defeat for the aggressor would have repercussions everywhere. It would encourage the people of Asia and South America to fight against foreign domination and oppression. The Americans understand this quite well. This is the element of truth in the notorious "domino" theory.

We share the aim of ending the war with others who pursue it solely for humanitarian reasons, or even because they believe it to be a wrong or unwise policy. At the same time we should recognise that in fact the achievement of this aim — to force our rulers to end this war — would be an enormous contribution to the world-wide movement for social change.
It should be clear to all activists in Australia this means above all to involve those sections of the working class — by far the majority — who are at present largely apathetic and passive about the war in Vietnam. Without that the movement cannot succeed in forcing an end to the war.

2. Our second aim — is to teach as many people as possible the real causes of the war.

These, we believe, lie in the nature of our social system, in the nature of imperialism. The war is not a “mistake”, but the product of a social system that has long outlived its usefulness, and in trying to maintain itself this system is threatening us all with destruction. It is only if this can be convincingly demonstrated to people who have been drawn into the movement that such wars can be prevented in the future — in such places as New Guinea.

Our openly stated aim is to advance the movement for ending the existing social system, as well as the movement to end the war in Vietnam. We have both aims, some in the movement have not. Some ignore the need to build a wide movement to end the war, some even sneer at such an aim and regard it as a sell-out. In doing so they are rejecting the pleas of the Vietnamese people who are at present in the vanguard of the struggle against imperialism.

For all its militant phraseology this attitude does not assist the development of revolution throughout the world. It ignores the lessons of both Russian and Chinese revolutions which have demonstrated the need for alliances to achieve specific aims within the revolutionary process.

If this attitude were to predominate it would seriously reduce the effectiveness of the movement for fundamental social change in our country. There is a vast difference between the attitude and level of understanding of the activists, who are a relatively small group, and that of the masses of supporters and followers of the anti-war movement. Because of this the problems among the activists are different from those of the movement as a whole. In the broad movement the main problem is apathy, conservatism, lack of concern and involvement and passivity. Among the activists however frustration and “super” left revolutionary phrase-making are the main concern. This trend, if not challenged, could seriously restrict the movement and prevent us from solving the main problem of the broad anti-war movement at this stage — overcoming apathy and involving the great body of the Australian working class against the war in Vietnam.
THE NAME INTI PEREDEO became known to many of us only when we read Che Guevara's *Bolivian diaries*. In these diaries he spoke approvingly of the Peredo brothers who fought with him in the ill-fated struggle to liberate Bolivia from the tyranny of capitalism. One of the five survivors of the guerrilla band was "Inti", whose real name was Guido Peredo Leigue. Inti was born in Trinidad, Bolivia on April 30, 1938. He was a student at the Juan Francisco Velarde and "Sixth of August" schools in Trinidad and at the Bolivar and Hugo Davila schools in La Paz. He was active in the Bolivian Communist Party after the age of twelve and was first leader of the Pioneers, then Director of Youth and finally First Regional Secretary in La Paz. He married Matilde Lara in 1963 and had two small children when he was killed. After escaping capture by government forces and their U.S. masters he fought throughout the Bolivian campaign with Che.

Inti and the group he led were helped by communist and other sympathisers to evade the government forces, who devoted especial attention to his capture as they knew that after their murder of Guevara Inti would become head of *Army of National Liberation* and continue the struggle. As one of the few survivors and the man who had saved his troops from capture Inti was "an undisputed political personality in the eyes of those comrades who share his ideals". It was rumoured in 1968 that he had fled to Eastern Europe. In fact he carried on the struggle started by Che and was interviewed in late 1968 by an Italian journalist while leading the *Army of National Liberation*. Several times the Bolivian government reported that he had finally been killed, but only on 9th September 1969 was their report true. Five days before his death he broadcast the following message translated into English for the first time, to the Bolivian people. His place has now been filled by another man for revolutionary struggle will never stop while oppression rules.

This last message is of great value for those trying to evolve an adequate revolutionary strategy. The success of the revolution in Cuba provoked much study of the methods used there, methods which defined
the long established strategies of the communist parties of Latin America. Che Guevara, one of the architects of the Cuban revolution, developed the tactics used in Cuba into a manual on guerrilla warfare (available in Penguin). He believed that the methods used in Cuba would prove successful in all Latin-America and put his belief into practice in the Bolivian enterprise. This attempt to apply similar methods to those used in Cuba did not meet with success, but whether this was due to some basic unsuitability of his methods or to more short-term mistakes was not clear. A number of observers, especially the communist parties of Latin America, drew the conclusion that his methods were unsuitable, and of course, reactionary observers like Daniel James ridiculed Guevara's romanticism and attempt to set himself up as another authority on guerrilla warfare, like Mao or Giap. The following article indicates that those in the struggle did not agree. But, as we will see in a future issue of ALR devoted in part to Latin America the deaths of Peredo and continuing failure of Che's method have led to radically different approaches being adopted, not only by Debray but by activists like Marighela.

Without wishing to distort Che's theory of What is to be Done too much, I think that its essence was this: 1) Popular forces can win a war against the army; 2) It is not necessary to wait until all conditions for making a revolution exist; the insurrection can create them; 3) In underdeveloped America the countryside is the basic area for armed fighting (Guerrilla Warfare, Penguin, p.13). So the ploy was to set up a guerrilla base (foco) in inaccessible territory and start attacking the existing State. The resultant conflict would make clear the nature of the State in its Leninist sense and polarise the two antagonistic supporters and opponents of capitalism in a way that no civil debate could ever do. The defeats of groups following these precepts have led first to Debray's early demand that the guerrillas be subordinate to the party and secondly to that of Carlos Marighela (see ALR forthcoming) that the main battle should not be waged among ideologically backward sections of the community (the peasants) but rather in urban centres.

Readers may themselves draw their own conclusions about the relevance of the various proposals for Australia. They should not dismiss out of hand the notion that revolutionary action should come after a long work of conversion by propaganda. What these writers are all saying is that actions convert the populace much faster than words.

ALASTAIR DAVIDSON

TO THE BOLIVIAN PEOPLE

THE ARMY OF NATIONAL LIBERATION [ANL] turned to the Bolivians to tell them the truth — as is and always will be its political and moral practice — about the events which are interesting the country. We have been forged from the people and we must render them an account for our acts. So, at this time of redefinition and struggle to the death we turn to them. For almost a century and a half the people have tried to carry further
the struggle for freedom started by Pedro Domingo Morillo, Padilla, Lanza, Camargo, Moto Mendez, Munecas and finished successfully, but in its first phase only, through the work of Bolivar and Sucre. Unhappily political power passed into the hands of a servile oligarchy, which then alienated sovereignty until it ended in its present state — Bolivia transformed into one of the many colonies of the United States.

The guerrilla foco of Nancahuazu, set up by Ernesto Che Guevera, was a sublime and heroic appeal to the ideals of the founders of the republic; it was the continuation of the Bolivian struggle and its transcendence as a new man, of whom Che was the living prototype, arose. It is for this reason that he was opposed with hate and cruelty by the imperialists of the United States and their native lackeys who filled the roles of executioners of their own brothers, helped by traitors in revolutionary garb and by the passivity of honest sections of the populace. That foco caused a polarisation in Bolivia between those who struggled for our true independence on one hand, and the sold-out, traitors and false revolutionaries on the other. It is right to state that an important part of our population was deceived by the false redeemers who instead of launching the attack on the real enemies, united themselves in chorus with the police and assassins, who, to repay them for their cowardice, made the concession of what they themselves have called "a democratic parenthesis", a parenthesis which exists for them only, since the populace has continued to be subject to bayonets.

The defeat of our first stage of guerrilla warfare should cause bitterness and shame among those honest men who did not join in it, for various reasons. Their duty at the present time is to give total support to the struggle in which so many patriots have fallen, to gather up the banner of Che and to follow his example. He has shown us the way to fight in the mountains. Up to a month ago, the ANL was, for many, a ghost which moved around Bolivia. The slaves of imperialism were faithful and continued to hand over our basic national riches without punishment, to massacre innocents, and to transfer the mines into nazi-style concentration camps and encourage fratricidal massacres among peasants. The traitors enjoyed what they thought had been the guerrilla's Waterloo.

The reformists spoke of revolution while they deceived the populace by participating in the gigantic farce of castrated democracy, preparing as accomplices the straw elections which will impose a duty of timeness, already designated the new latin-american style democracy. But the most aware sections of the people were working in secret with selflessness and devotion for
the formation of a new guerrilla foco. The ANL is not a ghost. It lives, and is ready to take up the struggle in the mountains. The ANL is the exploited people itself, once again reunited under the international banner of Che to fight until victory.

The epoch in which the forces of repression could arrest, torture and murder revolutionaries without being punished has definitely ended. Now the people have their own vanguard which will fight. Now the executioners know that they risk paying with their own lives for the arrest of one of our comrades, and if, thanks to their greater strength at present, which is transitory, they prevail, they will find that they have on their hands a corpse which will live for ever in the history of our struggles as an example of purity, honesty and love for this land, destined to become the motive force of a struggle for the liberation of the continent.

The reality of a true revolution has provoked a counter-blow; the unification of the local forces of imperialism, of the reformists and the false revolutionaries, which when faced with danger have taken off their masks and have formed the grotesque crew who defend the system of oppression. But the reality of a true revolution has provoked and will continue to provoke the ironclad consolidation of the best sections of our people around the ANL. If the majority of our fighters have not fallen it is because the people are protecting them. If their miseries do not grow then it is because they are surrounded by the warmth of the people. The ANL is a danger for imperialism, because the people march with its vanguard and because they have faith in it and because they have a growing hope that it will succeed. Those who die like Maya (Vita Valdivia, A.D.) or who fall fighting heroically like Victor know that they have behind them a people who are becoming more aware, ever more aware, of their duty and in a not far off day they will redeem freedom and power from the hands of the usurpers. Now those who fall know that wherever death surprises us it will be welcome, because our war cry will fall on receptive ears. Other hands will stretch out to take up our arms. Other men will hurry to intone the funeral chant with a sound of machine gun blasts and new victory and war cries.

Almost on the eve of the second anniversary of the murder of our heroic commander, the revolutionary scene in Bolivia has become enormously enriched. The traitors have been identified and will not escape the punishment of the people. The reformists cannot hide their bourgeois ideology any more. The traitors and reformists are allied with the lackeys of imperialism, traitors and reformists are allied with the forces of repression to demand harsher punishment for the guerrillas who are endangering the papier-mache democracy through their actions. The traitors and reform-
ists continue to bemoan the fact that the freedom struggle is able to alarm the imperialists and their lackeys and deprive them of a little "liberty". The history of Bolivia is full of massacres, often under the pretext that there were preparations for guerrilla war. Without having to go far into the past, we remember that the "gorillas" found pretexts for massacring the people in May 1965. Trade unions were liquidated by decrees backed up by the force of bullets. In the month of September of this year, no preparations for guerrilla warfare were known, yet the mines were the scene of the most terrible massacres in our history. Hundreds of workers, women and children were barbarously murdered. The massacre of San Juan needed no similar pretext because the guerrillas were in the mountains and could have been fought up there.

In 1968, all remnants of guerrilla forces were considered destroyed, the university students throughout the country suffered a severe repression and ferocious persecution . . . and no pretext was needed for the surrounding of the mines with a military cordon. The fact is that the enemy plays the "free democratic game" up to the point where this game does not interfere with its security. When this point is reached no pretext is needed for the destruction of democratic forces. Once these are liquidated, they can return to the "free democratic game". There are those taken in by the free democratic game who are content with the charity handed out as palliatives. These are artists at serving the system and making the people sleep, inducing them to believe in the free democratic justice conceded by the enemy. They do not understand, or through cowardice do not wish to understand, that these crumbs of liberty are allowed only insofar as they don't place in danger the security of the system.

Playing the game of this imperialist policy means making compromises with the enemies of the populace and disarming the people ideologically. Making the people believe that they are not ready to take power, means becoming the agent of imperialism whether you are aware of it or not. Revolution is not made by declarations in conferences. Revolution is made through struggle, replying to the barbarous violence of the enemy with revolutionary violence. Revolution is not made through begging for or defending pretended liberties which have never existed.

Revolution is made through giving your life if necessary, as Maya did, and as dozens of other comrades have done, opening up a path with their blood which the people are ready to follow. Revolution is made by replying to fire with fire, as Victor did, like a worthy soldier in our army. What sort of a democracy can we talk about when the President, Siles Salinas, is a political
prisoner who governs with the authorisation of General Ovando, the principal jailer, designated as the oppressor of Bolivia by imperialism? What sort of democracy can we talk about when we fix the presidential election of a general, wasting State money in a shameful fashion? What sort of democracy can we talk about when the agents of the political police (DIC) act like bandits, thieve, enter houses, arrest innocents, torture them and hold them under arbitrary arrest for months and years? What sort of liberty can we talk of when the foreign policy of this country is directed by the US State Department? Of what sort of democracy can we talk when Parliament is reduced to a puppet show which General Ovando moves as he wishes with the hidden help of the so-called opposition? What sort of liberty can we talk of when economic policy is directed by the International Monetary Fund, The World Bank and International Development Bank? What sort of liberty can we talk of when education at all levels is controlled by USAID and IDB or the Rockefeller or Ford Foundations? What sort of liberty can we talk of if the mines are turned into concentration camps, surrounded by bloody bayonets to secure an unhuman exploitation? The mines are death camps, where the workers suffer day after day, where babies and women suffer from acute malnutrition, where the lowest wages in the world are received, for unhuman hours of exploitation, while soldiers receive the highest wages in the country? The mines are death camps where the slightest protest is met with the murdering and cowardly machine-gun of the military, because the enemy needs no reason for beating, when it can, the shoulders of the workers.

What sort of liberty can we speak of when the peasants are used like sheep by corrupt leaders and pushed into fratricidal murder; obliged to support presidential candidates or constrained with violence to back those who massacre them. They are deprived of the most elementary sense of dignity. What sort of liberty can we talk of when thousands of peasants emigrate every year to nearby countries in search of work to survive? Witnesses of this immense tragedy are the canefields of the Argentine, the phosphate mines of Chile, and the rubber plantations of Brazil. What sort of liberty can we talk of when the civil servant is blackmailed into enrolling in the party having its turn in power, into attending meetings of support for the “gorillas” and obliged to sign congratulations and best wishes which offend his dignity?

What sort of liberty can we speak of when poor children, that is, the majority of Bolivian children, must leave school to do adult work so that they can have a crust to eat? What sort of liberty can we talk of when the sons of workers and peasants cannot go to study at the university because they lack the economic means
to do so? What sort of liberty can we talk of when people shoot, club and throw tear-gas against university students who demonstrate to ask for modest improvements and when university autonomy is reduced to its minimal expression because the universities are mortgaged to the IDB, USAID and foreign foundations? What sort of liberty can we talk of where students who have finished middle school are rejected by the university because of lack of space or lack of teachers and money? What sort of liberty can we talk of if professional men with university qualifications cannot find work and have to migrate to the United States or to Europe or, if they find work, the developed countries attract them away with the offer of higher salaries, thus saving on the trouble of their technological training? The brain drain is another of the thefts of imperialism which damage us.

What sort of liberty can we talk of? The liberty to organise unions? They have been destroyed with violence and those which are allowed to survive have to subject themselves before the threats of the decrees of May which have established the amounts and methods of trade union struggle. Economic claims are suffocated in blood. We are not opposed to trade union organisation or of the economic struggle, but we are sure that this is not the way to reach power. Only palliatives will be won which will prolong the ability of the people to suffer a little longer. The definitive solution is a change in the system and the ANL offers this solution. Revolutionary conditions in Bolivia have developed because a strong section of the people which is ever growing, is beginning to understand who are the enemies and who constitute their own vanguard. Sectors of opinion in the Catholic Church who have traditionally had a passive if not reactionary role, together with other sectors, are drawing close to the people and, coming to grips with their poverty, have understood the need for change and while attempting to institute it with reforms have been persecuted, accused and calumniated.

This is carrying them towards the great revolutionary stream in which all the people who really want the freedom of Bolivia and Latin-America will find themselves. This catalysing function is carried out by the guerrilla foco, which even before it showed itself in the mountains was already having evident effects. It is the guerrilla foco which has made the people aware, which is uniting them on the same road which it maps out to reach their objective: war; and it is the foco which protects them and stimulates them. The unity of the authentic revolutionaries is advancing with giant steps. So we see our future as Che forecast it: near and great.

The ANL, founded by Che in the flame of the struggle at
Nancahuazu knew victories and defeats, but it has always conserved and will always maintain the spirit which our leader taught us all. The ANL is not a "so-called" organisation, as some maintain. The ANL exists, it lives in the breasts of the people. The meeting in the Churo pass was not the last and has not destroyed us. The blow was hard, above all because we lost the most complete revolutionary of our time. However, in this historical phase, and today, things have taken place which have made the conscience of Latin America shiver.

The enemy gave its victory cry too soon; our army was not crushed, and we have never given up our sacred undertaking to return to the mountains. This is the truth and the Bolivian people must know it. Those who doubt our preparedness to return to the struggle are trying to deceive the populace to hide their own cowardice. This guerrilla struggle, which we will begin at the opportune moment, will not stop until Bolivia and all America are free of all oppression. Thus the duty of every revolutionary at this moment of definition is to enter decidedly into the ranks of this struggle, without hesitation and so hasten victory. But nobody should have any illusions. This is a long and cruel struggle and will assume very violent and bloody characteristics. These two conditions are imposed by the enemy who will never give up his spoils without a struggle. The guerrilla struggle, however, is the only hope for victory, and we will wage war, not because we have the mentality of warmongers, but because — as Che said — our enemies push us into such struggle. There is no other solution but to prepare for it and decide to undertake it.

When in July 1968 I released a manifesto explaining to the people the scope of struggle and the causes of its victories and its defeats, many thought it marked an "honorable withdrawal". Once again they were mistaken. To abandon the struggle is cowardice which history will punish inexorably and the men formed by Che will not treat or surrender. The open enemies and the hidden ones, those who applauded the death of Che, those who forecast the end of the guerrilla struggle, those who, believing us dead, began to slander us, are now trembling. We are here, organised in our best cadres and we will begin the struggle again. The most recent happenings have shown this. We have suffered a few setbacks but the people will return to make their victories in the mountains and cities of Bolivia and Latin America vibrate. The people of Bolivia have a great responsibility before history, since the struggle in our country, through Bolivia's political and geographical situation, has an enormous influence on this part of the Continent. This struggle will speed up action in other countries and for this reason the nearby "gorillas" will come to
do battle on our own terrain. But the Bolivian people, conscious of its duty, will not fail in their undertaking.

Bolivia which launched the first cry of freedom in America against the Spanish yoke, could count for her freedom on the help of all the patriots of the Continent. The consolidation of the process of emancipation depended on the freedom of Bolivia. Bolivar and Sucre were the major protagonists of that epoch. In the new and final liberation of America, Bolivia could again count on the most lucid person which the continental revolution has produced, Che and the band of heroes of various nationalities who accompanied him into the ranks of the ANL. North American imperialism will not give up her positions easily. She will employ all the means at her disposal to crush us, as she is doing in Vietnam, but in the same way as that people has done, our own will be able to defeat their own oppressors.

The balance sheet of recent events must be judged serenely. The ANL is no longer a ghost which wanders through Bolivia, it is the hope of the people and the instrument of their liberation; their army which assumes the defence of the exploited and the oppressed. This reality must be measured in all its greatness. It is true that we have made mistakes and, as is the duty of every revolutionary, we must recognise them and correct them. But it is sure that they are also mistakes that are made while working, errors into which those who are advancing fall, mistakes that are made by people who are not only spectators. It is also true that in wars battles are lost without the loss of the war. It is possible that the enemy will again defeat us, but this will not mean our destruction. The death of Murillo, Padilla, Warnes, was not the death of the arms of patriots. The murder of Che has not led to the death of the revolution. While honest and courageous men exist in America the victory of the revolution is guaranteed.

It is true that we placed too much trust in ideologically weak sectors; this weakness in work allowed the enemy to penetrate us, allowed spying and betrayal; the painful encounters in which we lost cadres of great value have made us take up the correct path. However, the guilty will not be able to avoid the punishment which they deserve. The traitors and spies will be executed as Honorato Rojas was for his cowardly and miserable actions. The same fate awaits the police who beat, torture or use any violence whatever towards comrades who have maintained a worthy and honest demeanour. But it is also true that events have been exaggerated. Some have tried to show that we were tied to certain parties. The ANL has no treaty or agreement with any party. "Documents of great value" have never fallen into the hands of the police as the Ministry for Internal Affairs announced euphoric-
ally. It is false that they found in Victor's possession documents which contained evaluations of the capacity of the combatants. There are no messages in the hands of the government. It is false to say that a large amount of war material was lost. We lost only a part and we won it back in a fight. Scandalistic manoeuvres tend only to demoralise the people, but they have not succeeded because the people at present is protecting us and entering into the struggle with greater fervour than ever.

Some people have wanted to speculate about the participation of foreigners in our army. What a paradox! The employers of CIA condemn a foreign intervention. The ANL, educated in the purest spirit of internationalism, accepts in its ranks revolutionaries of any origin whatsoever, provided that they wish to struggle with arms for the liberation of our people. Revolutionaries who fight or who will fight in Bolivia have not come to exploit anybody, and will not carry away the wealth of our land. They come to give their own blood, if that is necessary, for the liberation of our people which will also be the liberation of their respective peoples. For this reason the participation of fighters of other nations in our army is not only a right, but the duty of all revolutionaries, as it has always been and as the struggle for independence and the present struggle have legitimated it. Cuba has been accused of organising our movement, and for this reason false or forcibly extracted statements about "links" which are not believed by anyone have been adopted. If the Island of Freedom can be blamed for anything, it will be for the example which emanates from its firm revolutionary position.

They have tried to blame the ANL for a series of dynamite blasts which happened recently, matters clearly perpetrated by the Ministry for Internal Affairs, and the army, as a method of work. The ANL is not a terrorist organisation. The reprisals and replenishing actions of our army in the future will be confirmed in precise communiques, where the reasons for each action will be explained.

We are entering the road of a new historical stage. The battle which began at Nancahuazu was briefly interrupted and has begun again. The road is long and full of sacrifice. We are ready to give our little bit, the only thing we have: life. We must win the freedom of Bolivia and happiness for our people. We have faith in our final victory because behind us there begins to arise a people which has been oppressed for a century and a half, but which now sees on the horizon the instrument of their liberation.

People of Bolivia: to the Struggle. To the mountains. Victory or death.
THE THREE LETTERS printed below are published in full for the first time in English. (They were originally written in Polish). Rosa Luxemburg was one of the great Marxist thinkers of the turn of the century. Born in Poland on March 5, 1871, she soon became active in the Social Democratic movement. Opposed to the PPS (Polish Socialist Party), particularly on the question of the independence of Poland, she and a group of young Polish revolutionaries formed a revolutionary Social Democratic Party, which Rosa Luxemburg represented for many years in the 2nd International.

Among the members of this Party were a group of people who later became prominent in the early Communist movement, the best known of them being Dzerzhinsky, later leader of the Cheka in revolutionary Russia. In this group was also Leo Jogiches, the recipient of these letters. Leo Jogiches lived for many years in Switzerland and, as will be seen from the letters, an intimate and complex relationship developed between him and Rosa. Jogiches started out as the mentor and critic of Rosa, but she was soon way above him; “an eagle” as Lenin described her. Luxemburg never married Jogiches, because, as shown by the third letter particularly, they grew apart mentally. When Jogiches finally came to Germany the relationship was at an end.

However politically, Jogiches remained a friend of Luxemburg, doing much organisational work, bringing out the famous Spartacus Letters which Rosa Luxemburg wrote from jail in the first world war. He was with Luxemburg at the foundation of the German Communist Party and after her murder, published much of her writing and defended her views.

Rosa Luxemburg has been ignored for many years in the revolutionary movement, and that is not the least of the crimes of the Stalin period, but is at present being read and studied again, having very many important things to teach us in the present period of the revolutionary struggle. These letters give an insight into the personal life of Rosa Luxemburg, an aspect which is not often described.

HENRY ZIMMERMAN

Paris, Thursday evening, (5th April, 1894).

Here I am sitting at home (i.e. at the hotel) at the table and trying to deal with the Proclamation. My Dziodziu! I really don’t feel like it! My head aches and feels heavy, on the street noise and a horrible din, in the room it is hideous. . . I would like to come to you, I can’t go on! Just think, another two weeks at least because next Sunday I cannot prepare for the lecture because of the Proclamation, I must therefore wait until the follow-

1 Term of endearment which Rosa Luxemburg used for Leo Jogiches.
ing Sunday, and then there is the Russian speech and then I must go and see Lavrov.

Dziodziu, when will all this finally end — I am beginning to lose my patience, I am not concerned about the work, but about you! Why did you not come to me here? So that I may have you with me — no work would cause me any trouble then. Today at the Adolfs, in the midst of the discussions and preparations for the Proclamation, I suddenly felt such tiredness and such desire for you I almost screamed out. I fear the old devil (the one from the old times in Geneva and Berne) will suddenly grab me and lead me to the Gare de l’Est².

To console myself, I imagine how the engine whistles, how I take my farewells from Jadzia and Adolf, how the train starts to move— when I go to you. Dear God, it seems to me that more than the whole mountain chain of the Alps separates me from that moment Dziodziu, and I shall arrive in Zurich and how you will be waiting for me and how I shall crawl out of the carriage at last and run towards the exit of the railway station and you will be standing in the crowd and you will be unable to run towards me, but that I shall come running towards you!

But we shall not kiss each other immediately, no, not at all, that only spoils it, it doesn’t mean anything. We shall only go home quickly and look at each other and smile at each other. And at home — we shall sit on the couch and embrace each other and I shall burst out crying— just as I am doing now.

Dziodziu, I don’t want this, I want it to happen earlier! My precious, I can’t go on. Unfortunately, as I fear a house search, I have for safety’s sake burned your letters, and at the moment I have nothing which could console me.

If you knew what kind of Polish you write! You will cop it from your wife for that— you’ll see. No doubt you will be angry now — in the whole letter not a word k dyelu.³.

Here, to console you, a few words k dyelu. I liked your Proclamation very much, apart from a few formulations. If that informer is really in Zurich, try to meet him and entice out of him this unfortunate issue of the (Workers’) Cause⁴, that is very easy.

Is there no telegraphic news from Wlad (yslaw Heinrich) about the effect?

² Paris railway station. Trains for Switzerland leave from there.
³ (in Russian in Cyrillic script in the letter) = to the point, relevant.
⁴ Workers’ Cause (Sprawa Robotnicza). Organ of the Social Democrats of the Kingdom of Poland.
Friday: I have received the money, books and letters. Am sitting over the Proclamation. Keep well and write.

Send me the issue of the **Ateneum** dealing with tariffs and the cuttings, which Janek (Bielecki) had.

Your R.

Berlin, between the 12th and 20th July, 1898.

My only one, why are you so sad? Be of good cheer, for you have a capable little wife. Your wife will work hard and will earn a lot of money and will have enough not only for herself, but will also send each month a little money to her Daddy and another little bit to her Dziodziu, and all this without great difficulty, easy as winking. To be serious, my idea to write short notes about Poland, France and Belgium for Parvus, was simply an idea of genius, for not only does it not take much of my time, not only does it not cost me the least mental effort, not only do I get money for subscription to newspapers, apart from all this I also earn money that way. Because of these notes I must read the newspapers constantly and assiduously, which means I am always up-to-date with political affairs. Furthermore, Parvus is also pleased and thanks me profusely. So in that respect everything is in order. As for my idea for the **Leipziger (Volkszeitung)** I shall add information about its results to this letter tomorrow after receiving a reply from Sch (onlank). But I shall not tell everything, not in summary form, whether good or bad. So Dziodziu, and don't you dare to think of re-claiming your security money from the Community! You little scoundrel, that money stays there for your doctorate, and even if you already have citizenship, it shall go straight to the Bank under seal, until you sit for your examinations. For your living expenses, your own money is sufficient, and (if the thing with Schonlank works out) I shall have every month, I estimate, a minimum of 100 Mark. No, no, don't laugh, please. I shall put the balance sheet on the table at the end of the month.

Probably you have been without a cent in the last few days, but you couldn't write to me about it earlier, could you? So that I might have been able to send you 10 Marks immediately from my reserves. I am swimming in opulence here at present, I don't

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5 Ateneum — literary and political monthly which appeared in Warsaw from 1876 to 1901 and from 1903 to 1905. The letter refers to articles which dealt with the customs duties between Russia and the Kingdom of Poland, and the influence of the Russian customs duties on the economic life in the Kingdom of Poland, and which appeared in the *Ateneum* in 1890, 1891 and 1894. Rosa Luxemburg used them in her doctoral thesis *The industrial development of Poland* on which she was working at the time in Paris.
spend the whole amount, which you send me, although I paid for the newspaper subscriptions out of my own pocket till now, and although, if you'll excuse the expression, I eat like a horse.

You want to know how I spend the days, very well. I awake in the morning at about 8 o'clock, hop into the entrance, grab the newspapers and letters, then crash into the warm bed and read the most important thing. Then I have a cold rub down (regularly every day), then I get dressed, drink a glass of hot milk with a sandwich (the milk and the bread are delivered every morning) on the balcony, then I get dressed properly and go to the Tiergarten for a one-hour walk (regularly, daily and irrespective of the weather). After that I return home, take off my coat and write my notes for Parvus or some letters. I lunch at about 12.30 at home in my room, for 60 Pfennig, wonderful and very nourishing meals. After eating every day, bump on to the sofa to sleep! At about 3 o'clock I get up and drink tea and I work on the notices or write letters (depending on what I did in the morning) or I read.

From the library I got Bluntschli's History of public law\textsuperscript{1}, Kant's Critique of p(ure) R(eason), Adler's History of soc(ial) pol(itical) Movements, well and also Capital. Between five or six o'clock I drink cocoa, continue to work or even more frequently I go to the post office to post the letters and notices (I very much like doing this). Towards eight o'clock I eat dinner (don't get a shock): three soft eggs, cheese or sausage sandwiches and a glass of hot milk. Then I start on Bernstein (Oy . . . .). Towards ten o'clock I drink another glass of milk (a litre every day). I like working in the evenings. I have made a red lampshade and sit at my desk, close to the open window leading to the balcony; the room looks very pretty in the pink dusk and from the garden fresh air comes through the balcony.

At about twelve o'clock I set the alarm clock, hum softly to myself, prepare the dish of water for my morning rub down, then I get undressed and bump into my feather bed. Satisfied, Dziodziu? So am I. Golden Dziodziu, leave me alone with her Ladyship and those people. Firstly my sister is coming to visit me, then we shall meet you and thirdly it is the silly season here now. In one word, till the beginning of the Parliamentary session and the lectures I neither need or wish to see people, that is people in whom we might be interested.

Furthermore, I have contact with the most important of them by letter; with Br(uhns), Sch(onlank) and Par(vus), through whom

\textsuperscript{1} Johann Kaspar Bluntschli, author of a History of General Public Law and Politics published in Munich in 1864 and a number of subsequent editions.
I can fix everything that is necessary. When Sch(onlank) comes here, he will introduce me to the best people in the country.

In the meantime I am delighted to have holy rest from all Swabians\(^2\). Agreed? Now as to our reunion. I shall certainly not go to Switzerland, but you shall come here.

You and I, we must both get rid of those impressions from the past; also I tell you again, that I count on you to come to the fields with me, and to annoy you, I shall pick cornflowers in the field. That you'll be able to live there is beyond question. During the whole time I was in Upper Silesia, no human soul asked me for papers, although I openly carried on agitation, but I shall check everything exactly with Bruhn and in the worst case I shall get you some documents for a short time from some Swabian; we shall live somewhere in a little village among fields and woods, alone, like Adam and Eve and in a single room. But for all this we must await the arrival of my sister. Are you looking forward to our reunion?

Now for a few words about business. Write and tell me to whom should I send the thesis. A few corrections I will send you tomorrow, when Humblot returns them to me. Shall I send you something from my newspapers? Although I am pleased that you have to go to the “Leseverein”\(^3\) nevertheless one can’t read much there all at once. Perhaps I shall send you the *Vorworts*\(^4\) every other day? Because I read it immediately and normally there is nothing in it to cut out. Or the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*\(^5\). (What a wonderful paper!)

Now Dziodziu, you will write and tell me in detail what you do all day, what you eat and whether you go for walks. And about the doctorate. And make sure you always read a good book, for I don’t want a fool for a husband! About the work on Bernstein, in my next letter. Kisses.

Your wife.

P.S.: As far as the Seidels are concerned, everything is all right. I received a letter from them today. I am sorry that your relations with them are strained. I fear that you acted in too petty a fashion. You don’t have to keep a strict account in dealing with them, in view of the favours they rendered me; they make no differentiation between us, and their “besceremonnosti”\(^6\) towards you was largely because of their attitude to me.

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\(^2\) Szwaby in Polish — used frequently by Poles to describe all Germans.

\(^3\) Library in Zurich.

\(^4\) Central daily newspaper of the Social-Democratic Party.

\(^5\) Social Democratic newspaper in Leipzig, for which Luxemburg wrote for many years, being on its editorial board for some time.

\(^6\) In Russian in the text = unceremonious behaviour.
My dear Dziodziu! Yesterday morning I received your express letter, this morning the registered one and at lunchtime the second one. Dziodziu, I meant to write you a letter last Saturday without awaiting your reply, but you won’t believe how much work I have all the time now this Press Commission was formed, then I had to travel to Janiszewski because of my article, etc. And in the midst of this whirl, between one job and another, I was not in a condition to write to you, particularly as I had received no reply from you. From now on I shall write in any case whenever I feel like it and time permits.

First of all briefly about Polish matters. My precious, from afar, and without seeing what turn things have taken here, you propose to me an incorrect tactic. To write a la Marysia or generally to enter into sharp polemics regarding the Independence of Poland, that would simply mean to fall into a trap, into the trap which the people from Przedwit have laid for me. They are out to cause me to quarrel with the local proletarians, and I am out to see that this doesn’t happen. My reply had been in Morawski’s hands long before your letter arrived. In the note by the Editor in the last issue you will have read about it. They really were unable to print it in this issue. Whether my reply will satisfy you — I don’t know. I think it was the suitable tone for the situation here. Thanks to the Press Commission I will be able in fact to lead the Gazeta (Robotnicza), and make the people from Przedwit so ill, that they will leave. Next Sunday we have the second meeting — with Morawski — and the matter will be decided on the spot. You get excited and yet the real problem here is not to allow oneself to be provoked, and to pursue a calm tactic, like the one I started at the Party Congress.

1 She is talking of the Press Commission of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), in the part of Poland annexed by Prussia, and of its newspaper, the Gazeta Robotnicza (Workers’ Paper).
2 Without further particulars.
3 Przedwit — Journal of the Polish Socialists in London.
4 Rosa Luxemburg’s joining of the Socialist Party in the part of Poland annexed by Prussia at the 5th Congress was discussed in the Gazeta Robotnicza, in a special editorial headed “About the Congress”, in which her decision is welcomed, but not without some accompanying ill-will, that “Rosa Luxemburg has finally become a Polish Socialist”, and that it was pleasant instead of an enemy to meet a friend who adored the same god as ourselves”. This was to stress that the Party remained on the basis of its Programme for the independence of Poland and that Rosa Luxemburg’s joining openly showed that she also supported this programme. (Footnote continued on next page).
to remain firmly in the saddle, so that no one from Przedwit will be able to unseat me.

I don't feel any more like writing about business. But I add that the tactic of explanations from Posen and Upper Silesia, aiming to exert pressure on the Germans, directly contradicts that which is necessary. The point is that the locals find protection with me against the Germans and not the other way around, and as for Posen and Upper Silesia, I have already written to you a number of times, my precious, that nothing can be achieved in this way. People are beasts and they either do nothing or they do it in such a way that one gets sick and tired of it (as happened to me with the Posener with their idiotic decision, by which they contributed to the dissolution of the PPS). I can only rely on what I do myself.

Now as to private matters. Of course, you are right, that for some time now we have been leading a separate spiritual life, but this in no way began only in Berlin. We were already spiritually estranged for years in Zurich. The last two years in Z(urich) — it is firmly entrenched in my mind that I felt terribly lonely. But then I wasn't the one who cut herself off and separated herself from you, it was the other way round. You ask whether I have never asked myself: how do you live, how are you going? I can only smile with bitterness. Oh yes, I asked myself these questions thousands of times, and not only of me, but also of you, loudly and consistently. But always got the reply that I did not understand, that you do not rely upon me, that I can give you nothing, etc. Until I stopped asking and showed in no way that I saw anything or was interested in anything. You write and ask how I could believe that you were interested in somebody else, as no one else could satisfy you or understand you. I used to say that to myself too.

But have you forgotten, that you have repeated to me hundreds of times recently that I also do not understand you, that you feel lonesome with me also! Wherein lies the difference, then? Only when I realised that, did I begin to believe that I no longer existed for you. That I reacted differently to such thoughts in 1893? But then, haven't I changed since then? At that time I was a child, today I am an adult, matured person, who understands perfectly how to control herself, even when I have to swallow

Rosa Luxemburg replied to this immediately in a letter to the editor. But in the following issues there was only an editorial note (to which Rosa Luxemburg refers in her letters to Jogiches): "We must ask Comrade Luxemburg to have patience until the next issue for her answer to the article 'About the Congress'." The reply duly appeared and called forth further attacks from the editors and the Party leadership.
my pain with gnashing of teeth, to allow nothing, but absolutely nothing, to be noticed. You simply refuse to believe under any circumstances, that I have matured and am no longer the same person as eight years ago.

Now another thing. You constantly ask how I could have accepted so calmly the idea of ending our relationship. Whether this happened "calmly" I shall not deal with here. But how did I in any case reach that position? I'll tell you the whole secret: I realised particularly after my last stay in Z(urch), that you have completely lost sight of my spiritual make-up, that for you I am only someone who is distinguished from others, at most, by the fact that I write articles. I, on the other hand, particularly here, when I see everywhere the kind of women other people live with and how they adore them and how they pray to them and hold them for God knows what, how they literally subject themselves to their rule, I remember at every step, how you treat me, and it became clear to me that you have lost every appreciation of and have forgotten my mental make-up. And this realisation was for me the most convincing—and the most painful proof that your feelings for me have cooled.

You ask whether I am prepared from now on to lead again a common mental existence with you. The answer is clear, but remember, that it depends on you to realise this. To live in the way we have in the last few years makes it impossible to build a common mental life. If you abandon your present disbelief that I can understand you, that I can interest myself in your inner life, etc., only then is an understanding possible between us. I could still tell you many, many things, but truly I have no more strength to write about all that. When you are here, when we finally begin to live, then we will tell each other everything. And perhaps it will then even be superfluous to talk about it.

I shall write to Forrer in the next few days, this matter is dragging on unbearably. You know, when I think about where we are going to set up our home, I again return to the original plan: perhaps to settle for six months somewhere in the South? For here it is impossible to live together openly, and without that it would be a caricature, which I fear more than loneliness. After all we need quiet in our life together and how can you find it here if you have to hide your relationship? Think about it. What's new with Anna? I did not write to her. You can probably guess why. I kiss you many times.

Your R.

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5 This refers to Rosa Luxemburg's divorce from Gustav Lubeck whom she married only to enable her to obtain German citizenship.
Discussion:

MEN AND WOMEN: EQUALITY AND DIFFERENCE

MAVIS ROBERTSON hopes her article (ALR No. 28) will “provoke some reaction”. It has. This is not an attempt to lay down a programme for the Women’s Liberation movement, but to dispose of some popular fallacies, and clear the ground for a constructive approach. Comrade Robertson rightly condemns the lunatic “anti-man” fringe of the movement, but seems inclined toward the more wide-spread and equally fallacious view that, to prove themselves equal to men, women must prove themselves almost identical with men.

Of course, no one denies that there are innate and incurable physiological differences between men and women. Dispute arises over psychological differences. Although Margaret Mead’s researches on popular stereotypes of “masculinity” and “femininity” in various primitive cultures have shown that these differences are socially conditioned to a much greater extent than was previously believed, the question of how far they are innate, if at all, could only be certainly answered by observing how men and women develop and react to each other in a society in which there is no social, educational, economic or political discrimination between the sexes. There being no such society, most people tend to answer purely on the basis of prejudice and wishful thinking, taking the question outside the scope of rational discussion.

A true Marxist approach must be based on such objective criteria as are available, and be subject to frequent review in the light of new knowledge and experience. Cde Robertson thinks Engels failed to explain sufficiently why women came to their present inferior position. Maybe so; but the explanation is not to be sought in “the extent to which the reproductive role of women limited their mobility and, at a particular historic stage, made them vulnerable” to a wicked conspiracy by men to enslave them. Conspiracies on such a vast scale do not occur.

Rather, privileged classes become established by distorting some already existing social relationship and perpetuating it long after it has outlived its usefulness to the rest of society, being powerfully assisted in this by the firm belief of the average man (and woman) that he (or she) happened to enter the world at the precise time and place at which moral philosophy attained ultimate perfection. Cde Robertson’s analysis also fails to explain what she calls “the myth that only men can do hard work”. All other privileged groups in history have considered themselves divinely ordained for intellectual or heroic pursuits, leaving heavy manual labour to the “lower orders”. Surely, even the most extreme feminists would hardly regard a morbid love of hard yakka as one of the peculiarly masculine vices?

The female of all mammalian species, including man, is vulnerable during her gestation and lactation periods, not only to aggressive individuals of her own species, but also to predators and competitors. Most such species, again including man, have met this threat to their survival by evolving a protective instinct of the male towards the female, which among some peoples has developed into chivalry. While feminists are justified in objecting to the kind
of “chivalry” that costs them a large cut in salary, they would be ill advised to try to outlaw chivalry altogether; it represents too deep-seated an instinct to be repressed completely without serious neurotic consequences.

Further, woman’s “vulnerability” is due, not only to her “restricted mobility”, but perhaps even more to the rather drastic modifications to her skeleton and musculature necessitated by her child-bearing function, rendering her much less mechanically efficient than man, and therefore less well adapted to such pursuits as hunting and fighting. Primitive tribes who depended on their hunting prowess to stave off the constant threat of starvation, and were subject to frequent attack by large carnivores and by rival hordes of hominids, had to develop a division of labour whereby the women, children and physically handicapped men performed all the necessary tasks of which they were physically capable, leaving the able-bodied men free to devote their superior athletic prowess entirely to the chase and to defence against predators and competitors. Such a division of labour persists even into modern times among nomadic hunting peoples such as the Australian and American Aborigines. This division of labour reinforced the condition that brought it about, for natural selection favoured the tribes with the strongest and swiftest males. Woman, having less need of great strength and speed in the performance of her normal tasks, was left behind in this development. This accounts for the great disparity between men’s and women’s records in nearly all branches of athletics.

This real inferiority of women in the performance of certain tasks led rather naturally, if not very logically, to a wide-spread impression that women were inferior to men in a more general sense also. The development of agriculture had little effect on the drudgery of “women’s work”, but gave men more leisure for cultural pursuits. Probably this factor, rather than any innate difference, accounts for men’s traditional supremacy in most of the arts and sciences.

It would be most remarkable, however, if an evolutionary process that produced such profound physiological differences failed to give rise to innate psychological differences between the sexes, to fit them for their different roles in both the reproductive and the economic processes. Psychometrists have found such differences, but feminists brush them aside as the result of social conditioning. This is probably only a small part of the truth. It is not hard to relate most of the observed psychological differences between the sexes to their different roles in primitive society, and, since our ancestors lived in such societies for tens of thousands of generations, innate characteristics evolved during that period can hardly have changed perceptibly during the few hundred generations since they began to form agricultural settlements, still less through half a dozen or so generation of urban industry.

“Women’s work” being at least as essential as men’s though often less spectacular, it is not surprising that women are, on the average, superior to men in some forms of mental ability and of skilled labour, though inferior in others. They are also less prone to violent crime, military heroism and other forms of hooliganism, though more prone to such passive vices as unquestioning obedience to unreasonable authority rules and regulations. Women’s liberationists, then rather than try to imitate men, should insist that, in a world tending more and more toward drab uniformity, it is a matter for rejoicing that there is at least one delightful difference that can by no means be eliminated.
Man's claim to supremacy on the basis of superior athletic prowess is outdated in an age when the athlete is purely ornamental, the hunter an anachronism, the unskilled labourer a poor substitute for a machine, and the warrior an unmitigated pest. Moreover, tertiary sex differences are mostly a matter of averages rather than absolutes: some men are better fitted for some kinds of "women's work" than most women, and vice versa. In an era when the very survival of our species is menaced by our command of forces of nature threatening to outstrip our ability to manage them intelligently, we dare not waste any kind of intellectual ability because it comes in the same package as the "wrong" sex, pigmentation, accent or what have you.

In short, equality does not mean identity or egalitarianism, but equal opportunity for all, whether male or female, black or white, highbrow or lowbrow, to find the niche in life best suited to their abilities and ambitions. This can only be fully realised in a society freed of all exploitation, oppression and discrimination; but, in working for the maximum possible degree of women's liberation within existing society, we can help to burst its bonds and build a new and free world.

Arthur W. Rudkin

PATERNALISM ON WOMEN'S LIBERATION

IT IS WITH REGRET that I cross swords with my old Queensland comrade, Ted Bacon, who, I am certain, over many years has given sterling service to the Communist Party Women's Committee in that state. However, in seeking to refute charges of paternalism in the work and attitudes of the C.P. (Judy Gillett and Betty Fisher, ALR No. 28), Ted exudes paternalism in almost every paragraph. Further, having charged Gillett and Fisher with a failure to carry out a concrete analysis of the position, he himself commits that very crime in the next two paragraphs.

To assert that "apparently only women (and selected women at that) are regarded as competent to speak about a major revolutionary task concerning both men and women, though some men may perhaps qualify if, like Marx and Engels, they are dead or if they are non-Communist", is a travesty of reality. The days of "selected" women were in the past, and current practices are putting an end to this, as the very well-attended discussions among women held over the past six months in Sydney and elsewhere will testify. Many of these women, like me, have not had such opportunity for years to participate in discussion and policy-making as is currently available to us, and to the men in at least two of the discussion I have attended. And did men in fact speak up very much in the Good Old Days on this subject? Peruse the files of the Communist Review Ted, and you'll find the same old things being said, at the appropriate times, by much the same people, nearly all women.

The other feature of the current situation which is exhilarating to large numbers of party women is that today new and truly revolutionary things are being said. Perhaps they are often said in crude, abrupt, one-sided ways, but they are just as often mature, considered and scientific. At all events, the emphasis is on a Marxist approach, and in the tremendous upheaval going on at present in the thinking of women, for the first time in my experience (and I read Origin of the Family 30 years ago), we are getting deeper than lip-service. We have rejected the paternalism which said that women are half
the population and no revolution can take place without them, and then neglected to make a concrete analysis of the sources of their exploitation.

Perhaps you think the Party did make this analysis? “The exploitation of women is a class question”. “Women must fight alongside men for the liberation of all.” “Women have special problems and need special organisations”. “Women must and do participate in the struggles around the major issues facing the working class as a whole”. All these statements may be true, but they avoid the fundamental question of the role of women as women in society, and particularly the fact that women are exploited not only as part of the working class, but also are oppressed as a sex, and to ignore this goes a long way towards preserving a very comfortable status quo as far as the relative positions of men and women in the party are concerned.

Of course there have always been male CPA members who have given a lot of theoretical and practical attention to the problems of women, but they have operated within the confines of the old concepts, which in practice were not revolutionary, and led the women's movement generally into a Reformist position (see Mavis Robertson's article, ALR 28). They therefore fell short of Women's Liberation. And the fact that the constitution of the CP explicitly accords equal rights to all members ranks with the fact that the Constitution of the Soviet Union guarantees equal rights to men and women in the Soviet State. You can put it on paper, my friend, but we still have to fight for it.

To claim that Paternalism is not the only barrier to the realisation of full rights for women in the party, and that women's own acceptance of inferior status is a tremendous obstacle, is begging the question, apart from the fact that Gillett and Fisher in their article also stated this to be so. To me this ranks alongside the one put forward so often by Communist Trade Union Officials to justify lack of equal pay in militant Trade Union offices, namely, that when Clerks as a whole have won it, then girls in Trade Union offices will get it too. (In itself not always true, by the way, as the action of one such office in Sydney in “absorbing” a pay-rise testifies.) In other words, “we know these are injustices, but it's not our place to take the initiative in correcting them”. The sentiment rather belies the previous claim in Ted's article that CPA male members pay solicitous attention to female rights — or wrongs.

It is unfair on the basis of their article for Ted to suggest that Judy Gillett and Betty Fisher think the situation can be overcome by rhetoric. Even if it were a valid assessment of their position, which it is not, a footnote to their article states that these two are activists in the Women's Movement in S.A., and presumably not seasoned communist leaders, so it is scarcely encouraging to up-and-coming talent for a member of the CPA national committee and long-time party leader to wag a paternal finger at them.

Ted makes a generous, and I think accurate estimate of one side of the role that women have played in party organisations. However, his statement that Judy and Betty present women as spineless and unintelligent for the most part, did not appear to me to be justified from their article. Ted misses the whole point of what they (and Mavis Robertson in her article) are saying. The fact is, not that they are spineless or unintelligent, but that both they and the men are conditioned to unquestioning acceptance of their role in society. The “battle of the sexes” is liberally scattered with one-upmanship sayings e.g. “Women can't understand mathematics”. “Men are basically brutal”. “Women
can’t think logically”. “Nothing matches the pain of childbirth”. “Ever had a kick in the balls?” Among all this nonsense is one truth, namely, that you can’t really appreciate discrimination unless you’re on the receiving end of it. Many Australians fall into the complacent and self-congratulatory position that there is no real racial discrimination against Aborigines here, on the part of ordinary people. But if you have a coloured skin, you won’t share this benign (paternal) view.

Similarly, you don’t really appreciate sexual discrimination unless you’re a woman. When I recently said that every day brings to me at least one humiliation purely because I’m a woman, my 20-year-old son was frankly sceptical (not so my 16-year-old daughter), he having a picture of me as a highly-paid career woman and liberated female. Ted is similarly unknowledgeable, and, inevitably, naive.

It is true that some women have played a major political — not menial — role in the Party, and absolutely true that many women have of necessity displayed more stamina than men, both physically and politically. CPA insistence on the equality of men and women may have attracted women to the Party, but judging by the discussions I have recently attended, they have all too often found the reality considerably less than the written word. A number of questions come to mind in this regard, viz: — Have you really recorded the number of menial tasks performed by party women, or do you just not notice them in their familiarity? What do you call menial tasks? Do you classify endless clerical work for example as necessary and honoured work? Do you assume on any committee (as was done on the recent Anti-War Conference Committee) that this work will automatically be done by the women, one of whom in this case was a member of the CPA National Executive? What yardstick do you use to determine whether those women who do “make it” into political leadership have opportunities to reach their true peak of development and contribution to the revolutionary movement? How do you determine how many more have never had the opportunity to “make it”, or do you just assume they’re not good enough? At what cost is this participation achieved in terms of physical and mental exhaustion, emotional problems and strained or broken relationships, guilt feelings and disturbed relationships with children?

Obviously what Ted says is true to some extent, and I think Judy and Betty over emphasise at times, but they nevertheless present what women experience most of the time. I have been a fellow-member of Ted’s on State and District committees 20 years ago, and I more than once incurred the wrath of some of the other women on these committees by insisting that there was no discrimination against women, and that their contention that it did exist was sheer feminism on their part. What I failed to appreciate but learned later, and what Ted still does not understand, is that even today a woman can achieve real equality with men in the CP only if she can live like a man, and work like a man with his relative freedom from day-to-day responsibility for the running of the family. Even then, she usually has to be twice as good to be considered anywhere near equal.

By this I don’t mean the obligation of being the breadwinner, (and even here women are more and more having to assume a share of this responsibility), but I’m speaking of the mundane things most men treat with blithe disregard if there’s a meeting to go to, like has everyone got clean clothes for school
tomorrow, will you get the washing dry on a wet week-end, who's going to mind the kids at night, has the 6-year-old got his costume for the school play on Monday, how is the 9-year-old going to get to soccer on Saturday, and when am I going to get time to do the shopping and clean the house if I go to my meeting? I don't deny men are paying some attention these days to these sorts of jobs, but how often do they shrug them off again if something “more important” comes up, in the manner society holds proper for the male but not the female?

Ted enunciates a whole number of truisms about the needs of work around the problems confronting women in order to reject the need for serious consideration of the basic charges of lack of creative thought by the CPA about the role of women in society. I find this different only in degree from the bewilderment and nervousness of many male branch members today, whose confusion and dismay is revealed in current comments like “You want to watch out for these liberationists. They’ll eat you”, or even more helpless, “What do they want? What are they after?” Ted reveals his affinity with many male party members in the patronising remark that “he has been happy to work and study under the leadership of women members”. Some of my best friends are women!

His final paragraph does grave injustice to the present National Committee of the Party, under whose vigorous and imaginative leadership the ever-widening discussions about a revolutionary programme for women are taking place. The question is not whether real effort will be made to involve the whole party. It is that major steps have already been taken in this regard, and I am happy to see that the National Committee is more concerned with encouraging women to say what has been on their minds for a long time, than it is with asserting the creditable performance they have put up in the past.

Kathleen Olive

AUTHOR COMMENTS

NOT ONLY does Mary Murnane’s review of my book *A New Britannia* enter into the debate at an informed and important level it also extends the range of some of the points I made. So that further development can occur I would like to make the following six points.

1. Murnane says ‘the central impulse of the book is to locate the Labor Movement in the materialistic, acquisitive perspectives of Australian society as a whole.’ This is very close to my intention which was to write a history of the ALP. I realised that if I wrote an Australian equivalent of Ralph Miliband’s *Parliamentary Socialism* I would not have located the sources of Labor’s central malaise because I would have written an organisational history. That is why I followed Gramsci who demanded that the history of a party be the history of a society from a monographic point of view. Thus every section of *A New Britannia* was conceived of as part of a history of the ALP. This applies to the convicts and the invaders just as much if not more than to the Socialists and the Unionists. By this marxist means I hoped to show that the ALP is irrevocably committed to capitalism and that it was not just a matter of personalities or contingencies. Any real critique of *A New Britannia* has to begin by recognising it as a history of the ALP.
2. On the question of the changed nature of unionism after 1880, which Murnane properly observes is most scantily treated, I would add that the more I see of the 1880's the less impressed I am by the distinction between old and new unions. Certainly there was a fight between the 8-hour trades and the new unions for control of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council. But the issue was not one of striking or not, nor even of political action or not. It was rather a demand by the semi-skilled unions to be admitted to the grandeur of the old unions conditions. Both kinds of unions would strike to gain or preserve the eight-hour rule, or the recognition of the union — if striking became inescapable.

But the emergence of the new unions did not alter the consensual view of society possessed by the old unions. Indeed benefits seem irrelevant as the AEU became extremely militant in the twentieth century and maintained a most elaborate welfare system of its own. This was also true of the Melbourne printers in the 1880's. It is significant that W. A. Trenwith, who was the undisputed leader of the new unions in Melbourne, voted against strike action in 1890 and consistently refused to sign a pledge during his eleven years in Victoria's parliament as the leader of the Labor Party. The whole concept of the 'new unionism' demands fresh scrutiny to see if it is not an unwarranted import from the Webbs.

3. Murnane says that I am loath to recognise any sort of radicalism in the Australian past. This is a severe misunderstanding of the deliberately restricted scope of *A New Britannia* and in other hands has led to it being described as anti-working class. The first thing to say about this is to suggest that all interested read my chapter 'Laborism and Socialism', Richard Gordon (ed.) *The Australian New Left* (Heinemann, 1970). As I have explained above *A New Britannia* is an elaboration of the first section of this essay. The radical working-class has been deliberately excluded — not because it was not present before 1920, but because it was necessary to focus attention on the attitudes that continued on to form the Labor Party. My articles in *Arena* 19 and 20 contain more material on the emergence of the proletariat. There is an enormous amount still to be done.

4. Murnane says I disagree 'that bitterness and militancy were strongest in Queensland'. I do not; see pp.214-5 for my criticisms of Nairns' account of Spence's role. What I said was that Queensland was neither as militant nor as bitter as Gollan sometimes claimed and that the bitterness was the rancour of smallholders towards absentee finance companies. Murnane challenges this for the Central West although admits it for the Darling Downs. This misses the whole point. The rancour of smallholders operating as shearers well away from their holdings on the Darling Downs was strongest in outback Queensland precisely because it was there that they encountered the largest absentee station-owners. The Darling Downs was full of smallholders and short on bitterness, as a local issue.

But the sustenance of the land myth requires a series of books like *Selector, Squatter and Storekeeper* before we can be certain. All that Waterson and Buxton have done is to detach two sizable but somewhat special districts, the Darling Downs and the Riverina, from Russel Ward's version. But even if Ward is correct for the rest of Australia we are left with the problem of accounting for the persistence of the land myth well into the twentieth century. The chapter on 'selectors' was the longest because land seemed to be the most important means by which it was believed that the ravages of capitalism were to be avoided; and the most overlooked.
5. Murnane’s criticism on the absence of any solid ideological framework to show why the working-class willingly acquiesced other than hegemony contradicts her final paragraph where she says I locate ‘the story of Australia in a universal context’. I attempted to place Australia in its imperialist perspective. Thus working-class acquiescence is presented in terms of Lenin’s theory of a labour aristocracy. It is this breaking away from the contemplation of the outback to a concentration on Australia as an outpost of Empire which most markedly distinguishes my approach from that of Russel Ward.

6. It is finally alleged that I do not ask or answer ‘whether the Labor Party sharpened the liberal conscience into conceding social welfare programmes’. Might I suggest she read p. 234 again?

HUMPREY MCQUEEN

JOHN SENDY AND THE ALP

JOHN SENDY (ALR 29) discusses some of the fundamental questions of socialist strategy in present-day Australia, and in particular the relation between the ALP and socialism, and between socialists and the ALP. In doing so, he comments on an article I wrote in Labor Times (Vol. 1, No. 2).

Inevitably, there are some basic differences between Sendy’s position and mine. Sendy writes as a Communist seeking an appropriate strategy for Communists in relation to the broad labour movement and the contemporary protest movement; he believes that there are no meaningful prospects for socialists within the ALP. I write as a socialist (of the libertarian Marxist variety) who believes that meaningful socialist activity can best find expression through the ALP, and who is seeking an appropriate strategy for socialists within the ALP. It seems to me to be important for the socialist movement that there is a clear understanding of these differences.

I start from a number of assumptions. They are all arguable, but they are the ones I hold.

1. It is not right for socialists to impose their vision of society on the mass of people. (In any case, it is self-defeating. Experience suggests that the fact of imposition, or “commandism”, necessarily produces institutions and power structures which deny that vision.)

2. The only possibility of achieving socialism is through the creation of a mass socialist consciousness.

3. There is nothing in the present Australian political climate to suggest the existence of such a mass socialist consciousness — or the immediate prospect of one developing. (The militant protest movement on Vietnam, urban development, “quality of life,” etc. is in my view insufficiently developed, either in numbers or theoretically, to offer any more than a limited increase in socialist consciousness — desirable in itself, but not enough.)

4. History (particularly the depression experience) suggests to me that the mass of the people are not prepared to move beyond “democratic” and parliamentary solutions so long as they believe that their conditions can be ameliorated and their problems at least in part solved by these means. There is nothing in the present political climate to suggest the possibility of any such revolutionary transcendence. (The militant protest movement may seem to
qualify this, but I do not believe that it really does. That movement can encourage resistance, and help to change mass consciousness, but it cannot impose its will on society as a whole.)

5. Working on these assumptions, I conclude that the best available strategy for socialists — by which I mean the strategy which can realistically contribute most, and fastest, towards the socialist vision — is a strategy of working in and through the mass labour movement, that is, the trade unions and the ALP.

I do not mean that this is the only strategy for socialists. Vanguard organisations and movements, acting on the fringe of or beyond the existing norms of the mass movement, have an essential part to play. Without vanguards, no change could occur. But the vanguard cannot substitute itself for the mass movement. It seemed to me to be significant that John Sendy, discussing the various crises in the history of the ALP, mentioned 1916, 1931 and 1955 — but not the split in NSW during the early war years, when the “Evans-Hughes group” was expelled from the ALP and formed the “State Labor Party” (which later merged with the Communist Party). This was an important example of the vanguard trying to substitute itself for the mass, and “getting done” in the process. That experience has relevant lessons for Victoria now.

My objection to the former leadership of the Victorian Labor Party — apart from its authoritarian and bureaucratic method of running the party, and its lapses into opportunism (the deal with the NSW right-wing) — was its political sectarianism, its concept of itself as a vanguard rather than a mass party. This sectarianism was expressed in the concept of “street politics” as the correct tactic for the Labor Party, and a corresponding denigration not only of parliamentarians but of the parliamentary process, an approach which went far beyond existing mass consciousness.

I do not want to deny the value of direct mass action — though when this passes beyond protest and resistance to an imposition of will, it raises the question of principle I suggested earlier. What I am asserting is that, in the present political climate, the labour movement requires many kinds of action to advance its ends — industrial and community and parliamentary action. The ALP is that part of the labour movement whose job it is to win parliamentary power — and as such it is a necessary part of the movement. To win parliamentary power, it must seek a broad consensus within its natural electorate (industrial workers, white collar workers, small farmers, the professional intelligentsia) on a realisable programme of radical reforms, relevant to the massive economic, social and political problems Australia confronts, and consistent with a socialist objective.

I do not conclude from this (as John Sendy suggests) that such a strategy will automatically transform the ALP into a socialist party. That will require a great educational effort by socialists, and new kinds of experience for both labour movement activists and the mass of the people. However, I still adhere to a position I argued when I was being expelled from the Communist Party in 1958. If the ALP is a “two-class party”, within which ideological struggle will inevitably continue, how can one assume that, in the long run, and as mass consciousness changes and develops, the ideas of socialism will not prevail?

IAN TURNER

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FIRST, I WILL TRY TO GIVE a short background to these talks and second, estimate where they are now and what is the position of the parties; and also the possibility of these talks bringing a final settlement to the Vietnam question. The first thing is the background. President Johnson started the bombing in 1965 in order to deter North Vietnam from entering South Vietnam and to bring North Vietnam to the conference table. He said that he wanted to have a general settlement and wanted to make a compromise; that he was making no preconditions; even that he was prepared to negotiate about the independence of South Vietnam without any precondition at all and would give millions in aid to Vietnam if violence were given up and people sat around the table to negotiate a reasonable settlement.

The problem was that from the start in 1965 things went wrong because the Americans did not understand the Vietnamese psychology. I was in Washington during the first pause — the five days pause of May 1965 — the Americans paused the bombing in order to let the North Vietnamese consider whether they would go to the conference table. It was a type of ultimatum; if they were willing to negotiate the bombing would be stopped. But even before they got the reply they resumed the bombing. A very few days after that some famous American generals came to Paris and

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The concluding part of the address will appear in the next issue of ALR.
we had an interview with them and with non-communist and anti-communist Vietnamese military leaders. It was a very interesting and stimulating talk because these non-communist Vietnamese, of military bent, said: "You Americans have understood absolutely nothing about Vietnamese psychology."

In human relations in Vietnam, when two people have to discuss something, and one suddenly becomes angry and starts to shout, the other will withdraw and say: "Please don't shout, please be calm. When you start acting in a civilised fashion we will be able to talk." From the outset the Americans had begun to shout and become angry and, from a Vietnamese angle, that was uncivilised. They slapped, they hit and they knocked, and that was a mistake. They did not understand that even a servant boy, from the lowest rank in the society, will do nothing and refuse to answer a question when he is hit by his master or a wealthy man. If his superior then becomes a little angry, though not uncivilisedly so, and asks him why he is not replying to a question, the boy will say: "I will speak when you stop being angry and when you stop hitting me."

This Vietnamese psychology is very ancient and has nothing to do with communism. If you want to talk in Vietnam, you should not apply force, blows or bombs; you should offer something and compromise. So from the start Johnson had made a miscalculation when he thought that he could make the North Vietnamese come to the table by force and the whole bombing offensive was a mistake. Johnson was never ready to accept any unconditional cessation of the bombing because of his pride, and stated that he would stop it only when the other side gave a clear indication what they would do on the cessation of the bombing. The North Vietnamese, under pressure from the Russians and from other sources, demanded an unconditional cessation of the bombing. Then in 1967 and 1968 the tone changed and Hanoi said that she would talk if the bombing ceased. So finally the talks were arranged.

Johnson's great gamble was that if he ceased bombing north of the twentieth parallel the other side would still not agree to talk. It was a gamble in this way: After the Tet offensive the cities of South Vietnam were in so much danger that the Americans had to concentrate their effort on certain military areas — they had to withdraw troops from elsewhere to protect Saigon, Da Nang and the trade links and concentrate on preventing the NLF launching their decisive offensive. Johnson realised that he could not both bomb in South Vietnam and continue the bombing of North Vietnam. He would have to concentrate the bombing on the north-east area. He presented it as a general concession of stopping
the bombing above the twentieth parallel. Actually he had to shift the whole effort to other areas.

He was in a panic when the North Vietnamese agreed to talk. I can tell you about this in a very precise manner— even the French were quite unprepared for negotiation by the North Vietnamese. Some Americans met French foreign ministry officials at about lunchtime. The French officials stated that Hanoi would not talk despite the limited cessation of bombing. The Russians had said so. And suddenly at 4.55 p.m. the news arrived that Hanoi had agreed to talk about conditions for the cessation of the bombing. This means that they had decided in that limited time. This took the Americans by surprise and they tried to delay the actual holding of the conference in order to prepare new diplomatic and military positions to face a new situation which had taken them completely by surprise. So when the two sides met in May 1968 in Paris the Americans had still not prepared their new line and still insisted in bringing forward their main general claims. The other side merely insisted on an unconditional cessation of the bombing. They were not really clear about what they wanted.

The conference in Paris started on May 10 and on May 13 began the French May '68 "revolution". This immediately deflected world interest from Vietnamese affairs. The French "revolution" completely outranged the Vietnamese question as news for many, many months. The Americans made much of the French 1968 "revolution" because through using French domestic problems they could cloud the Vietnam issue. Many other matters also became very important at this time— like the Czechoslovakian affair which was a direct consequence of the French affair of '68. The Russians feared that the May "revolution" would spread to Eastern Europe. The whole thing changed world opinion and brought it into the American camp and the Vietnamese lost their position in world opinion because of the French domestic situation.

So what was the position at the start when the two sides sat down around the table? The Americans wanted a concession, some reciprocity for the cessation of the bombing. They had put forward the term reciprocity since 1967. They still maintained that they would not cease the bombing except on the basis of reciprocity—the other side would have to do something in exchange. The North Vietnamese were absolutely adamant on this matter: no talks, nothing until the bombing ceases unconditionally. So some people went between them trying to arrange an acceptable and intelligent solution which would reconcile the two positions. First they sought an indication of what would be phase A and what phase B of the talks.
Phase A: the Americans wanted to know what would happen if they ceased the bombing unconditionally. The other side refused to talk but they let it be known indirectly that when the bombing ceased they would talk about the political future of South Vietnam. This meant that the Americans and the North Vietnamese had agreed on two steps in phase A. Although the Americans had not written down or said anything firm about unconditionally ceasing the bombing, they would in fact cease the bombing of the North. In phase B the two parties would agree on the details of the conference, bringing together the participants for a future political solution in Vietnam. The Johnson administration — people like Harriman and Vance — became directly acquainted with the North Vietnamese for the first time.

There is no doubt that a personal relationship developed between Harriman and Truong Chinh and the North Vietnamese delegation and that they learned to appreciate the positions of each other. Some of them apparently persuaded their governments that something had to be done to bring about a solution. Harriman was able to persuade Johnson that nothing could be done about South Vietnam if a stable balanced political situation did not exist; the Saigon government would have to be put on the same level as the other contending parties, including the NLF, around the table and it would have to compromise on the outcome, on something like free elections. So the Americans and Harriman had to put pressure on the Saigon government to get it to compromise with the NLF and treat on the same level with it. The Americans and the North Vietnamese would be behind the two parties urging a settlement. But, when the Americans started to urge this kind of settlement on the Thieu-Ky government, Thieu and Ky said that they would never accept it. They said that the NLF were rebels and agents of the North and that they would not compromise with them. Perhaps you remember that at the time of Ky’s visit to Australia Johnson indicated that he was thinking of a settlement between all sections of South Vietnamese opinion — so Johnson and the Democrats were actually ready to accept a settlement between Saigon and the NLF on equal terms. But the Saigon government said that it was the only legal, elected constitutional government and that it would not talk on equal terms with the others.

The trouble with that was that Thieu and Ky resisted American pressure in such a way and delayed their answer so that Johnson could not announce the agreement of October 23 between the North Vietnamese and the Americans. He wanted to announce on October 25 that he had reached a settlement with the North Vietnamese and that he would stop the bombing on November 1, and
that the conference between the NLF and the Saigon government would take place in Paris immediately afterwards, so that he could win the November 5 elections. Although the NLF had been informed that they should have their people in Paris at least three days before the elections, Ky and Thieu delayed and delayed and were finally victorious. The Americans could not announce the conference until November 1, when it was too late. The Republicans were extremely grateful to Saigon for their victory, and the whole complexion changed immediately.

During the last stages of the Johnson administration, Harriman could not exercise the pressure he wanted on the people in the Saigon government. They resisted continually. The resistance over the shape of the table was of very great importance. What both the Americans and the North Vietnamese wanted was a four-square table. Saigon wanted a long table with two sides because, they said, they were resisting communist aggression from the North — the NLF being the same thing — and they and their allies the Americans were the second side. They could not accept the North Vietnamese proposal that there be a round table either, as this too would have placed them on the same level as the NLF. They finally agreed on a round table cut in two, with two separate tables at the end marked occupied.

After that the Johnson administration left and the Nixon administration came in. The whole approach to the conference depended on the Nixon administration's problems. From the start it has been a theme of significance how it saw the question. The Americans seized the initiative and this is extremely significant as the Vietnamese were finally brought to the conference table. The North Vietnamese wanted to know exactly what the Americans had in mind as a settlement. They knew roughly that the Americans wanted to bring Saigon and the NLF together and they had agreed to have Saigon, although they did not recognise Saigon as such as a government. No solution could be reached without Saigon. And that would also depend on Thieu and Ky. The Americans were not very happy about the certain acceptance of the Saigon administration in the conference. They said on October 23 that they would not agree to the conference. They immediately accepted the NLF on a parity level. The sudden acceptance was, I have been told, a result of their surprise at Hanoi's acceptance of the presence of Saigon, and the Americans accepted the NLF's presence the same afternoon. After that Saigon reacted.

The Americans' main objective, and it is still their principal objective, is to win at the conference table where they had not done on the battlefield. They want an independent South Vietnam, an independent nation separate from the North and the maintenance
of the Saigon administration as such, or almost as such. To bring the other side into this framework they are prepared to grant a certain number of concessions in the political and economic field. The North Vietnamese and the NLF waited to see how the Americans behaved. It developed like this: the first thing the Americans asked for was true respect for the 1954 Geneva agreements, which was good as the 1954 Geneva agreement was the basis for anything. They then insisted on the 17th parallel as a demarcation line and agreed to withdraw their troops provided that the North Vietnamese withdrew theirs behind the 17th parallel. So the first demand they made was for a mutual withdrawal. The North Vietnamese have never acknowledged that they have troops south of the 17th parallel and refused to talk about a mutual withdrawal or any reciprocity for the withdrawal of American troops. The second demand of the Americans was that it be accepted that the Geneva agreements created two zones, and, practically, that these two zones be regarded as politically separate. This too was completely irrelevant to the Geneva agreements. It was a fabrication.

Immediately the Americans said that they had to have private talks with the Saigon regime. They at once got into great difficulties, not only with the NLF which kept them waiting, but with Saigon which did not wish to be on the same level as the NLF and even resisted talking privately with the NLF. But behind the scenes the Americans were able to come to an understanding with Theiu and Ky. They explained that through private talks the other side would finally recognise the Saigon government as the legal one, because through talking with the Saigon government they would accept the framework of the Saigon government. That was such a transparent thought that the other side rejected immediately the idea of private talks with the Saigon administration.

The other side then came onto the scene. It proposed that there be a change of government in Saigon, that the government be led by people who really and genuinely wanted to have peace in Vietnam and wanted to talk with the other side. And they indicated, as is so apparent from the recent history of Vietnam, that the Saigon team had been put in power in 1965 to wage war against their own people; that Thieu and Ky were warlords, who wanted to make war and sabotage the peace. In other words, the other side said that they wanted a peace cabinet in Saigon. My certain opinion is that they were extremely careless in putting forward their demands in this way, because they could have done so much more adroitly. The idea that they could only treat when peaceful people were elected to power in Saigon was good, however. The Americans replied that they would not withdraw
their support from, or drop, the Saigon government, which was a legal and constitutionally elected government.

I would like to give an anecdote which showed the way Nixon was thinking. M. Sainteny — who was instrumental in bringing about the Franco-Vietnamese agreement in 1946; who was ambassador to North Vietnam in 1954-7; who was the right-hand man of de Gaulle on the Vietnamese question; who was in Hanoi in 1966; who last year attended the funeral of Ho Chi Minh and who has very good relations with the North Vietnamese leaders — is also a friend of Nixon (and of Kissinger). So he has good connections on both sides. He told me last year that Nixon had told him privately that he would never do what Kennedy had done, drop his friends. Kennedy had allowed Diem to be killed but he would never drop his friends Thieu and Ky as a matter of personal honor. The personal commitment of Nixon is that the South Vietnamese will not be sacrificed to anything.

It is very important to know this. Many people cannot believe that American policy is dominated by emotions of this kind. That may be so — but where we have a private confession like this we must admit it as an important factor in the whole affair. As a generalisation we can say that the American administration, Nixon and the White House, are certainly not prepared to sacrifice the Thieu-Ky administration and Thieu and Ky know this. They played their cards accordingly. So after having explored the American approach in 1969 the NLF took the offensive. I can be specific about this. Since the beginning of 1969 Hanoi and the NLF have shared responsibility. The NLF is the main responsible body for everything in Vietnam seen from the other side. Hanoi remains in the background to remind us that Vietnam is one people and one nation; that the DRV has endorsed and signed the Geneva agreements; that the overall settlement in Vietnam has to be approved by the DRV and put in the framework of the Geneva agreements; and that the DRV has nothing to negotiate or say in Paris. The main actor is the NLF, while they remain in the background. The NLF, then, has the main say about matters Saigonese and South Vietnamese, and there is a great deal of difference between individuals in Hanoi and in the NLF. I have met the people of the DRV many times and the members of the NLF, especially the first team of negotiators at Paris, which was led by Tran bu Khiem.

He had been a resistance fighter since 1955; twenty-six years in the struggle. He is a charming man, not at all a doctrinaire. I don’t think he is a communist; he belongs to the Democratic Party of South Vietnam. I had lunch with him early in 1969. He explained to me that they had explored the whole American approach and
suggested that all the problems had one key: the presence of American troops in South Vietnam. Once this problem was solved all other problems would be solved one by one because they were all dependent on this one.

So as early as February 10, 1969, the NLF put forward the demand for unconditional withdrawal of American troops. After that this principle was enlarged upon and insisted on many times. It is the key to everything. Saigon would then have to treat with the Vietnamese.

The two positions were expounded in May 1969 with the appearance of the Ten Points of Tran bu Khiem and the Eight Points of Nixon. The Vietnamese position is: 1) unconditional withdrawal of American troops; 2) a provisional coalition government of South Vietnamese wanting peace, neutrality, democracy and independence and the election of a Constituent Assembly, and 3) self-determination for all South Vietnamese. All South Vietnamese affairs would be decided by Vietnamese and the unification with the North would be considered later. The American position is: 1) mutual withdrawal of North Vietnamese and American troops; 2) a political arrangement between the existing Saigon government and the contending parties in order to bring about a general election under international supervision, and 3) later economic aid from other countries. The basic differences were unconditional withdrawal and mutual withdrawal and existing or new provisional government.

Because the NLF asked for unconditional withdrawal of American troops and because Nixon could never agree because it would be the same as a defeat which would never be accepted, the two parties were unable even to table their respective plans and work out a basis for reconciliation. America had never been defeated in her 190-year history. Besides Saigon was extremely cautious and unwilling to accept a real coalition government.

Immediately after this Nixon and Thieu met at Midway and the South Vietnamese came back from Midway extremely upset. I met an American correspondent who was a very good friend of the Vietnamese ambassador in Washington, and he told me that the ambassador came back saying that the Americans were betraying the Vietnamese; that they were trying to force them into an equal discussion with the NLF and compelling the holding of fair elections. So, he went on, the South Vietnamese would have to delay to gain time, and thus show the Americans that they were being deluded by the communists. It was clear in June 1969 that Thieu and Ky would sabotage all American efforts to bring about a settlement.
The response by the other side, who interpreted this South Vietnamese pressure as an attempt to persuade the Americans to support them to the end, was to create the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, which, since it has been recognised by twenty-five countries, including Peoples' China and the Arab world, who cannot afford to lose face, will not be discarded. This meant that the maximum that the Americans could hope for was a settlement between the Saigon government and the PRG because the PRG cannot be ignored. It is a government within South Vietnam, making South Vietnam one country with two governments. Moreover, the first time Hanoi had accepted the principle that there should be two governments in the one nation and people. The Republic of South Vietnam was not entitled to decide which was the right government.

Since late in 1969 these two positions have not changed fundamentally. Nixon sent Ho Chi Minh a letter in June 1969 asking for a compromise. Ho said that he would consider the letter but he died a few days later and the new leadership in Hanoi had to rethink about the American position.

In 1969 there was a lot of sounding. The French and the Indians and the Americans made soundings through various channels to discover the PRG and North Vietnamese positions. It was clear that the Americans would not withdraw their support from Ky and would not accept a change of that government for a free peace coalition. They even reinforced the Thiey-Ky cabinet strongly. They simply waited for the other side to step forward and accept their proposal for a mutual withdrawal, negotiations with Saigon and new elections.

The day before Ho died, Hanoi and the delegation in Paris made clear that if the Americans would accept the principle of total withdrawal all the other matters would be negotiated and a timetable worked out. They discovered that the Americans were not ready to agree at all. So the Hanoi leadership took the view that they could expect nothing from the Nixon administration and a decisive shift in their position took place in September 1969. They indicated that they would wait for the next President. This means that the war will be waged at a very low level—they will change from military to political work—to gain without losses, at least in the cities, until the next US President is elected. And, if Nixon is re-elected they will wait for the President after him. Hanoi and the NLF are prepared to fight until 1976 or 1980.

Next issue: Devillers discusses the war in Cambodia and Laos.
THE MILITARY DEBACLE of the February-March invasion of Lower Laos by Saigon-US forces took many people by surprise. But in fact it merely reflects a truth about the Indochina war which the world will probably have more occasion to ponder on in the months to come than ever before. That truth is: the further Nixon presses North in Indochina, the closer he comes to the heartland of the strength of the liberation forces of the peninsula, and the fiercer the resistance he will meet.

In sending his forces into Laos where he did, Nixon sent them precisely into an area which is part of the big liberated region which straddles the borders of all four Indochinese States: the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. This being the case, he had every reason to expect to stir up a hornets' nest of resistance. Many comments by US servicemen, helicopter pilots and others, which are quoted in the March 22 issue of Newsweek, give a good impression of the changed character of the resistance here from the usual area of their operation, South Vietnam. The comments centre on the greatly enhanced firepower and aggressiveness of their adversaries, and the fact that life was proving much more dangerous in Laos than they had recently been finding it in South Vietnam. But one comment from an unnamed "observer" went right to the heart of the matter. He is quoted as saying of the fighting in Laos: "This is no longer a guerrilla war or even a semi-guerrilla war. It is as close to conventional war as you'll get in South-east Asia."

The forces confronting the Saigon armies and the US in Laos are as well as if not better armed than the invaders, with the single exception of airpower. Perhaps the remarkably effective use made by the resistance forces of their resources in Soviet-built
tanks best expresses their reality. Many factors go to create this situation: the relative shortness of communications and supply lines from the North is certainly one. But it is also true that the Bolovens Plateau area where the invasion took place is the birthplace of the modern Laotian liberation movement and where this movement is strongly consolidated. It is therefore an area where the political conditions greatly favour the resistance. This area, together with the three northern provinces of Phong Saly, Sam Neua and Xieng Khouang, represents the core of the strength of the Laotian liberation movement (long known as the Pathet Lao, sometimes called the Neo Lao Hak Sat, but now, in the new, expanded phase of the Indochina war, calling itself the Lao Patriotic Front).

Reflecting on the experience of the Laos invasion, it is necessary to ask what better fate Nixon can expect for his forces if he goes ahead with his much-touted option of a land invasion of the southern areas of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam? There, in the conditions of a thoroughly consolidated socialist State power, with highly organised regular and popular militia forces in places down to the smallest hamlet, the military and political conditions will be markedly more unfavorable to an invasion even than is the case in Lower Laos. The whipping currently (March 22) being inflicted on the Saigon forces in Laos can only be expected to be repeated and to be even more severe.

Beyond this eventuality loom Nixon's second and third options, the mushroom cloud at the end of the tunnel of the Indochina war: the use of tactical nuclear weapons in Vietnam, and a nuclear strike against China. This is the inescapable logic of US Indochina policy, which has for 20 years rigidly adhered to the pattern of seeking the remedy to defeat in a widened ("escalated") war. The present reverses for the US-Saigon side in Laos must be seen with this perspective most firmly in mind.

A summary of the background to the Laos invasion by Banning Garrett of the Pacific Studies Center, USA, appearing in the brochure Operation Total Victory (February 1971), is such a masterpiece of concise exposition that it merits being written into the record here. Garrett writes:

Laos was occupied during World War II by the Japanese, along with the rest of the French colonial empire of Indochina. Like the Vietnamese, Lao-tians organised a liberation movement which emerged to take control of the country when the Japanese were defeated. After the war, the French, backed by the U.S., returned to try to regain control of Indochina in a nine-year war which culminated in the decisive defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954.

The Laotian liberation movement which opposed the French until 1949 held together the politically diverse urban elite which had fought the Jap-
anese. In 1949 the movement split. The majority agreed to form an 'autonomous' government within the French Union. Many important 'nationalists' were allowed to return from exile. The new government 'legitimised' continued French rule.

The other wing of the anti-colonial movement began armed insurgency under the leadership of Prince Souphanouvong, who formed the Pathet Lao in 1950. The Pathet Lao worked with the Viet Minh in the successful Indochinese liberation struggle against the French and their Indochinese supporters. The Geneva accords of 1954 were to have neutralised Laos and to have integrated the Pathet Lao into the government. But the US had other plans for Laos.

In 1958, following a Leftward trend in Laotian parliamentary elections, the US engineered a Right-wing coup d'état (Toye, Laos). The 'civil war' resumed, with the American Central Intelligence Agency replacing the French colonial bureaucracy. In 1962, another Geneva Accord set up a neutralist government. This coalition government was short-lived, however. As the CIA backed the Right-wing and took control of the Royal Laotian government, the Pathet Lao resumed the fight, again turning to the Vietnamese (North Vietnam) for support.

Today the US clandestinely operates the effective Lao government, employing more than six thousand Asians and non-Americans. According to Fred Branfman (Laos; War and Revolution, ed. Adams and McCoy, p. 258), the Lao act as advisors to the US government administration of Laos, which has more employees than the Royal government.

Meanwhile, the Pathet Lao have maintained their autonomy while cooperating with the North Vietnamese. According to a 'long-time Western resident of Vientiane' quoted in the Far Eastern Economic Review recently (January 23), 'For years everyone's been claiming that the Pathet Lao is merely an "arm" of the North Vietnamese. From the hundreds of Laotians I've talked to over the past few years, that doesn't seem the case. If it is, then the North Vietnamese are pulling the most colossal con job in history.'

Fred Branfman provides us with a useful summary of US operations in Laos in the period preceding the present invasion '1) a massive air war directed, above all, at the destruction of the physical setting and the social infrastructure of the enemy; 2) a ground war fought by Asian troops directed and supplied by a relatively small number of American personnel; 3) the large-scale [forced] evacuation of the civilian population to American-controlled zones; 4) the creation of an American-directed civil administration paralleling the existing government structure; 5) a policy of deliberate secrecy designed to give the executive (US) as free a hand as possible.' (Laos: war and Revolution pp. 13-14).

In 1968, before Nixon escalated the air war over Laos, nearly all those living in Pathet Lao zones lived in caves, trying to farm at night. By 1970, the bombing had reached the figure of nearly 1500 sorties a day, at a cost of $2 billion per year (Robert Shaplen in Foreign Affairs, April 1970). The increased bombing has forced many to leave the countryside; the US has generated 700,000-800,000 refugees and killed another 200,000 through bombing (Senate Sub-Committee Report on Refugees, 1970).

Since the US subversion of the 1962 Geneva Accords in 1963, the ground war in Laos has continued in see-saw fashion with the CIA army crossing back and forth across the cease-fire line dividing Royal Lao territory from the liberated zones of the Pathet Lao. The Royal Lao Government has carried out offensives in the wet season, and the Pathet Lao retakes its positions during the dry season. This dry season, however, the US-Saigon invasion in
Southern Laos may provoke a Pathet Lao liberation of all of Northern Laos. The ‘civil war’ in Laos has been re-integrated into the War for Indochina.

Much propaganda effort has gone into establishing that the US is fighting “Hanoi” in Laos, that (as noted above in the Garrett document) the Laotian resistance is merely an extension of Hanoi’s influence, and that the Lao liberation forces are completely dominated by North Vietnamese.

I know from my personal experience and observation of relations between Vietnamese and Laotians that such a relationship (as is equally the case between Vietnamese and Cambodians) is just not politically feasible. History has determined that the national sensitivities of the Laotians in relations with their stronger neighbors, the Vietnamese, are such that a relationship of Vietnamese dominance would simply not be tolerated by popular opinion, on which the Laotian liberation forces must fundamentally rely.

As a matter of fact, to present matters in this way is merely an exercise in standing the truth on its head, in which apologists for the US Indochina aggression have a certain expertise. The real phenomenon of foreign domination of political forces in Laos is the domination of the Royal Lao Government by the United States. The real phenomenon of political manipulation in Laos is the use by the United States of Lao territory in pursuit of its strategic aim of dominance in the Indochina peninsula.

But how do the Vietnamese see the Laotian problem? Their starting point is that from the earliest days of colonialism in Indochina, Laos has been used as a field of manoeuvre by outside forces seeking to control the peninsula’s richest prize: the human and material resources of Vietnam. How this reality is reflected in Vietnamese consciousness is well expressed by a North Vietnamese spokesman quoted by Professor Noam Chomsky in his essay “A Visit to Laos”. (New York Review of Books, July 23, 1970). The spokesman told Chomsky:

Laos is on our Western border. For our own security, we cannot allow Laos to turn into a base for the Americans to threaten us. You know that the Americans have been using Laos as a forward base both for themselves and the Thais, and have guided their planes for bombing us from Laos... Laos has been a historic invasion route into North Vietnam. The French took Laos first, originally, before setting out to colonise us. At the end of World War II they went back in and took Laos first, then used route 9 to transport men and materials to take Hue, and also route 7. Our only concern for Laos is that it remain strictly neutral. We cannot allow Laos to be a base for the Americans with their planes, their soldiers, their special forces, their CIA, their Thais and other mercenaries.

Chomsky provides some fascinating insights into what is the real relationship between the two parties, the North Vietnamese and the Lao Patriotic Front. On the basis of conversations with
refugees from the US-bombed Pathet Lao areas, and in his study of American sources on the subject, he suggests that the Vietnamese exercise very considerable discretion and delicacy in these relationships. He cites a document on the matter handed out to him by the US Embassy in Vientiane ("Life Under the Pathet Lao", by Edwin T. McKeithen), which emphasises the reliance of North Vietnamese cadres working in agriculture, medical and other fields in Laos on "patient counsel rather than direct command", and their "softest of soft-sell approaches in dealing with their Lao counterparts", their "deep faith in the efficacy of endless persuasion" and in "the spirit of brotherhood which should bond their relationship" (with the Laotians).

A RAND Corporation study by Langer and Zasloff brings out the same essential point. According to the authors, the Vietnamese advisers provide experienced, disciplined personnel who add competence to the operations of their Lao associates. We have found that these Vietnamese advisers are widely respected by the Lao for their dedication to duty. By their example, by on-the-job training, and by guidance, generally tactful, they goad the less vigorous Lao into better performance.

The authors write:

The doctrine of the North Vietnamese places great emphasis on winning over the population . . . one would expect considerable tension between the Lao and their Vietnamese mentors . . . but we were struck by how successful the Vietnamese were in keeping such resentment to a minimum.

But perhaps most expressive of all is a story told to Chomsky by a refugee in the camp he visited outside Vientiane. Chomsky reports the story as follows:

During 1964 and 1965 only very few North Vietnamese soldiers were in the vicinity. By 1969 there were many North Vietnamese. The soldiers maintained a very strict discipline and kept away from the villagers. People felt sorry for them because of their enforced isolation. The Pathet Lao taught them that the North Vietnamese were their friends who had come to give them technical assistance and help them to survive. They had enormous respect for the North Vietnamese. To illustrate, he told a story of a North Vietnamese irrigation adviser who was condemned to death by the Pathet Lao after he had killed a water buffalo. The people objected and protested to the General, who affirmed the sentence. The man then killed himself. In general, they regarded the North Vietnamese with awe.

According to the best estimates Chomsky could uncover, the number of North Vietnamese combat troops in Laos did not exceed 5000 at a time (March 1970) when President Nixon went on public record to say that there were 67,000 such troops in the country. Concerning the US saturation bombing of Pathet Lao areas, Chomsky notes a phenomenon identical to that which I was personally able to observe when in North Vietnam in 1967 during the US bombing campaign of 1965-68. He writes:
It is doubtful that any military purpose, in the narrow sense, is served by the destructive bombing. The civilian economy may have been destroyed and thousands of refugees generated, but the Pathet Lao appears to be stronger than ever. If anything, the bombing appears to have improved Pathet Lao morale and increased support among the peasants, who no longer have to be encouraged to hate the Americans (my emphasis — M.S.).

The situation is exactly like that in Vietnam, where, in the first year of the intensive American bombardment in the South (1965), local recruitment for the Viet Cong tripled to about 150,000, according to American sources. And, as in Vietnam, the indigenous guerrilla forces are now more dependent on outside assistance as a result of the destruction of the civilian society in which they had their roots . . .

The reality of the Laos situation is this: with incredibly meagre resources — in 1960, the country had no railways, two doctors, three engineers and 700 telephones — the vital elements of the Lao people are reaching out for a modern life and renovated social structures. McKeithen, an unsympathetic observer, describes the achievements and aims of these elements as fellows:

They have pressed for economic equality by introducing progressive taxation and discouraging the conspicuous consumption that establishes a wealthy villager's status. They have almost eliminated the 'wasted resources' that are spent on bonus, marriages, funerals and traditional celebrations. They have taken initial steps towards the communalisation of property by establishing 'public' paddy, by closely controlling livestock sales and slaughter and by introducing public ownership of livestock in the school system . . .

The status of women has also been altered, as they have been given greater responsibility in administrative affairs and have assumed jobs traditionally restricted to men . . . (They have set up) 'youth organisation' devoted to lofty principles and dedicated to the advancement of long-term goals.

In their endeavors they are aided — out of social principle and perfectly legitimate strategic interest — by their neighbor people living in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and by more distant friends in China, the Soviet Union and elsewhere.

Opposing their purpose is the most powerful of the imperialist powers, which has squandered wealth beyond Lao belief to frustrate it. Yet still about one million (on American figures) of Laos' three million population still elect to live in the areas controlled by the Lao Patriotic Front. And this despite one of the most insane, persistent and destructive bombing campaigns in the history of warfare.

It used to be a joke of the French colonialist period for the French colon, just back in Paris from his stint in Indochina, to say to friends: "Laos? It doesn't exist. I know, I've lived there." The reality of 1971 tells us that Laos certainly exists.

The national reality of this poorest of South-east Asian countries has been affirmed in the crucible of the most brutal social, political and military torment.
THE DIALECTICS OF LIBERATION, Ed. David Cooper.
Penguin, 207pp, 85c.

“Our soldiers must hate. A people without hatred cannot vanquish a brutal enemy.”

Che Guevara

“Everybody get together and love one another, Right Now”

Contemporary pop song.

THESE TWO SENTIMENTS expressed by people widely separated in social space and time nevertheless (one might say therefore) express poignantly the complexity of the present world situation, in which even those who have a common ground (that they see the need for change) differ in their situations and therefore inevitably in the solutions offered. Each expresses the need for an overthrowing of repressive relations between people, but the circumstances are so different that the methods of fighting repression will inevitably be poles apart. One could take the attitude that one is right and one wrong, or that each may be right for a particular set of circumstances. Whichever attitude, or whichever viewpoint one supports, one is still faced with the fact that the viewpoints themselves, and those who support them, are all elements in the world social process. The complex interactions between all these elements, or what we might call a process of processes, can, from the revolutionary point of view, be called the dialectic of man’s social system. Hopefully, although not necessarily, it is a dialectic of liberation for man.

It was (and is) a feature of dogmatic “marxism” that the social dialectic was reduced to a single dimension — capitalist class vs. working class. The implication was that if you understood this you understood everything. Thus artistic expression could be divided into bourgeois and proletarian streams and if a revolutionary worker advocated policies different to yours, then he was a class enemy or, at the very least, a victim of bourgeois ideas. The complexity of human interactions and of people’s ideas were thus denied, and with that went any necessity to analyse different realms of social reality. Thus the psychology (“It’s a bourgeois science”) of human activities was ignored and, along with it, the analysis of conflicts and antagonisms within classes.

1 As cited by Gerassi: The Dialectics of Liberation p. 89.
2 Naturally, I would support Che Guevara’s as more realistic a way of solving the immediate tasks (and therefore of the dialectic). The feelings in the pop song overlook crucial features of western society and in that sense the song’s call is undialectical. Yet the song expresses a common feeling amongst the alienated young who need to overcome the isolation they feel in a repressive society. Because the feeling is a common one, and because the solution proposed in the song is a common reaction to that problem, then this is a step in the working out of the dialectic.
3 I cannot agree with Marcuse that “all dialectic is liberation” (p. 175) unless it is by definition. For in the working out of the dialectic we must allow of a tragic end, in which the forces for liberation are defeated by stronger countering forces within the process, e.g. a nuclear holocaust.

This is the second part of the article which appeared in ALR No. 29.
Perhaps two of the most obvious victims of this "class approach" were the questions of sexual and racial oppression. These were seen as of secondary importance, rather than as issues in their own right, inextricably linked with the revolutionary process. We still have young revolutionaries who will say when questions of women's or black liberation come up "They're just class questions. The place of women and blacks is with their husbands/white workmates in the fight against the capitalists". That the white (work)mates may cruelly exploit/oppress/repress their women or black workers is apparently not relevant. The other side of this coin was the isolation of most intellectuals, including many who adopted left or revolutionary viewpoints, from social praxis.

Today, we are still suffering from this historical legacy. One of the more obvious manifestations is the continuing gap between theory and praxis — between "theorists" and "activists". A conference of the left at which both theoretical issues and practical problems are discussed at a high level with both intelligence and a sense of commitment is rare, if it occurs at all. In the last two weeks of July 1967, there was held in London the Congress on "The Dialectics of Liberation". From the book in which some of the key papers are published, it would seem that this Congress was a welcome departure from the existing mould. For not only are the papers of the highest quality, they also cover a wide range of theoretical and practical issues. The perspective of each contributor differs from the others, yet together they make a coherent whole. The book is a fairly comprehensive critique of present-day class society from the philosophical-sociological right through to the politico-economical aspects. Stokely Carmichael adds to this an element of flesh and blood gut politics — my only criticism of the book is that there were not more activist papers dealing with the practical problems of the revolution.

The Dialectics of Liberation is not only excellent in its approach, it is also invaluable in the genuinely new insights it provides in our understanding of man and society and in suggesting the directions which future reorientations of the revolution may have to take. The first, and in many ways, the pivotal paper is R. D. Laing's "The Obvious". Because of its far-reaching implications, this paper is hard to summarise. Suffice it to say that Laing attempts fairly successfully to link events on the individual psychological level (the "micro-political" context) to the characteristics of the macro social system. Laing very effectively sets out the main features of personal action and interaction in a sick society. His central argument (take note all "bourgeois" psychologists) is that

For far too long psychologists have given a disproportionate amount of time and effort to the psychopathology of the abnormal. We need to catch up on the normal psychological correlates of the normal state of affairs, of which Vietnam is one of the most obvious normal manifestations. (p. 27).

Or, as Stokely Carmichael puts it

... the psychologists ought to stop investigating and examining people of colour, they ought to investigate and examine their own corrupt society.4 (p. 174).

It is Laing's analysis of the normal state of affairs in relations between people

4 We should notice here the vast difference in quality between Clancy's accusations (see first half of this article, *ALR* No. 29) and the critiques of Laing and Carmichael.
(especially in the crucial group, the family) which is his main contribution to an understanding and critique of modern society. Laing's anti-psychiatry methods and theories have been criticised by others in the field, and many of his ideas are not necessarily completely correct. Undoubtedly, Laing's theorising is sometimes loose and not always based on conclusive evidence; but equally, his ideas are suggestive of lines of future research which up till now have been largely ignored by most psychologists and psychiatrists.

However, it is Laing's method of approaching the problem which is important and represents a break-through from traditional approaches. Laing looks at the whole social context of the individual for an explanation of his insanity, not for something (biochemical or whatever) which most psychologists assume must exist inside him. One of the major contributions of Laing and the anti-psychiatry school to the understanding of social behaviour is their theory of scapegoating. This theory holds that many "insane" (or queer, or peculiar) people are actually the scapegoats for a small social group in a certain state of its development, driven by the group itself into modes of behaviour which the group labels as intolerable and proceeds to punish. The punishment may take the form of institutional violence (gaol, asylum) or a less formal (but no less injurious) rejection.\footnote{See Laing and Esterson \textit{Sanity, Madness and the Family}, and the books referred to in the previous article.}

Laing is open to the criticism that his theories are often speculative rather than proven. In particular, they leave open questions such as who is scapegoating whom in any specific situation without providing criteria by which one might judge. How important this criticism is, is open to debate. What is certain is that Laing and the whole anti-psychiatry school have opened up a new way of looking at society which is of extreme importance for the further development of a revolutionary critique of capitalism.

In "Conscious Purpose Versus Nature", Gregory Bateson is not altogether successful in his attempt to outline how the advent of consciousness in the material world has affected that world and posed certain dangers to it. What he does do very well, however, is to show that we are suffering from a lack of systemic, cybernetic understanding of the universe and how, by imposing on the world our ignorant purposes, we threaten our own survival. "Conscious purpose is now empowered to upset the balances of the body, of society and of the biological world around us. A pathology — a loss of balance — is threatened." (p. 43). That such a threat exists, and that it flows very powerfully from existing human characteristics is undeniable; whether Bateson's pessimism: "We have . . . the curious twist in the systemic nature of the individual man whereby consciousness is, almost of necessity, blinded to the systemic nature of the man himself" (p. 43) is justified is another matter. That people such as Bateson can speak about and warn of the dangers surely suggests that the "necessity" is not such, but rather a function of existing society. As Marx might say, having once recognised the problem, we are now free to attempt a solution.

Jules Henry's paper "Social and Psychological Preparation for War" is one of the best in an excellent collection. It is a central paper in that it links the economic, political and psychological spheres, providing a perspective from which the other papers can be viewed. Apart from Paul Sweezy, Henry comes
the closest to a classical "marxist" analysis of Western society, combining this with analyses which owe much to modern sociology and psychology. It is this combination that makes Henry's contribution unique — his paper approaches (given its briefness) the all-round critique of capitalism which is necessary.

One of the best sections of the paper is that dealing with the question of freedom in society. Henry points out that all societies limit the options available to the individual but that modern capitalism has succeeded in limiting the options and horizons of the people to a frightening degree. He combines this tellingly with an analysis which shows that the American economy needs war to keep going. As Henry neatly says "This means that under the present system man has no choice but to make war upon himself." (p. 54). This paper also takes a sideswipe at the bourgeois social scientists: "... there is, for example, no commitment in anthropology or sociology to any point of view" (p. 67). Henry quite correctly links this to a universal social phenomenon of our time — what he calls the prevalence of "short-run perceptions". "This superficiality, this fundamental impenetrability of the soul, is due to the evanescent quality of modern life and to the basic depression of modern man." (p. 67).

Where Laing and others analyse the psychological aspects of politics, and Henry combines this with an economic analysis of the system, John Gerassi and Paul Sweezy, in two brilliant papers, concentrate on a political and economic analysis of imperialism. There has been much excellent work recently on American imperialism, some of the best of it by Gerassi. But for a brief exposition of the facts about US imperialism and a trenchant indictment of it, it would be hard to beat Gerassi's paper "Imperialism and Revolution in America". There is little need here to summarise the paper, but I must say that within it Gerassi makes one of the most pointed attacks on American liberals I have seen. Gerassi tells the story of a Bolivian peasant woman he once met who did not feed her youngest of five children because there was not enough food and he, being the weakest, would die anyway. As he says "When you are forced into this kind of choice, you hate — the hate that Che Guevara talks about, the hate that leads you to kill". (p. 8).

Gerassi points out the essential dilemma for white Anglo-Saxon revolutionaries: "Our hatred is intellectual, not the hatred that comes from having to choose not to feed one out of five children". Gerassi warns the hippies, us and himself:

But should we become threatening, then we'll be hit. If the US can smash people all over the world with guns and napalm, it certainly is not going to be gentle about the way it tries to suppress hippies. (p. 90).

Of all the contributors, Gerassi is the only one who explicitly states his recognition of the different yet related tasks of revolutionaries within and without imperialism:

... for those who suffer from lack of necessities, liberation is to fight; while for those who have the necessities and more, liberation is to break the restrictions and establish a new society that will allow all men to talk about their souls". (p. 94).

Paul Sweezy's "The Future of Capitalism" is an important economic analysis of early and modern capitalism. Sweezy combats what he sees as various in-

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6 The Great Fear in Latin America, Collier, 1967.
correct theories about capitalism, held by bourgeois economists and by theorists of eastern European communism (and, by implication, those who accept their analysis). Sweezy challenges even some previous marxist theories which hold that, after capitalism developed in western Europe, it then became imperialist. Following analyses such as Cox's *The Foundations of Capitalism*, Sweezy puts forward the view that capitalism was imperialist right from the start.7

Paul Goodman, at 60, is a kind of liberal anarchist equivalent of Herbert Marcuse. His writings have appeal for many of today's young radicals, and there is no doubt that he senses the pulse of the age more perceptively than many (one might say most) half his age. There is a compelling quality about many of his arguments, particularly those about power, yet many others of them seem naive in the extreme. In "Objective Values", Goodman sets out his political credo clearly and succinctly. Because of his over-hasty rejection of marxist theories of class and class struggle, and his idealistic belief in "the international of the young" many marxist revolutionaries may be inclined to ignore him altogether. This would be as dangerous and unwarranted a rejection as is Goodman's own of marxism, for Goodman has much to teach us. He particularly has much to teach dogmatic marxists (of both the "old" and "new" varieties).

Goodman emphasises the common problems facing all present-day societies—the misuse of technology, the abuse of the planet's ecology and the over-centralisation of control and power. Though several tendencies of revolutionary marxism (including the CPA) recognise and have developed theories about these problems, most tendencies tend to reject them as non-existent, unimportant or, worse, as capitalist red herrings. Others pay lip service, but in effect, refrain from developing new forms of struggle to combat the new dangers. The world has a very good chance of ceasing to exist in the next fifty years, yet with a blindness to reality which is falsely labelled "revolutionary optimism" dogmatic marxists of all shades go on repeating the slogans of yesteryear in the belief that the capitalists are too sensible to destroy themselves as well as the rest of us, an assumption which might be true but, equally might not. Revolutionaries (and this the dogmatists simply do not understand) have no right to make assumptions.

Like most anarchists, Goodman is very entertaining in his denunciations and perceptive in his posing of the problem. When he comes to analyse the system in detail and provide some solutions, however, he comes somewhat unstuck. His virtual denial of America's need for economic imperialism (p. 118-121) is fantastic and his belief in the young of the world as the new revolutionary force is not exactly based on hard fact.8 Goodman would benefit

7 Before one could say he was right, Sweezy would have several points to explain, e.g. why did capitalism develop first in Britain and not in Spain. equally, if not not more, the beneficiary of colonial plunder. Sweezy seems to ignore the role of technology, but his theory is worth consideration.

8 A more sober estimate of the present state of the sub- and counter-cultures of the young is given by Richard Neville (Old Mole No. 8, March 1971, p. 14). Neville savagely exposes the brutalisation which has taken place in sections of the youth culture. The article demonstrates that there will be no short cut to revolution via flower power, pot and acid. "Love everybody" is not a slogan which can provide a stable basis for a revolutionary movement. The consciousness of the young will have to be somewhat greater than that.
here from a healthy dose of non-dogmatic marxism. On the other hand, Goodman's outline of how future society ought to work, and his criticisms of romanticism amongst young radicals are relevant and to the point. They also demonstrate an integrity and lack of opportunism which is all too rare. One suspects that Goodman views himself as a devil's advocate — we would do well to accept him as such rather than as the devil which many would probably see him as.

Stokely Carmichael was brought to the conference as a representative of revolutionary activists. His paper represents all that is best in the black power movement, but also much that is worst. His analysis of racism, which is a mixture of Marx, Fanon and American black power theorists, is perceptive and telling, yet he cannot avoid the trap which so many of his movement fall into. That is, the reduction of all political events to a racial dimension. "The proletariat has become the Third World, and the bourgeoisie is white western society". (p. 165). To a black American, this may well be an observable fact, but his perceptions are just as relative as those of his white counterpart who puts it all down to the class struggle. What is important about Carmichael's speech is that we learn just what his perceptions are, which is more than many who call themselves revolutionaries ever bother to find out.9

If Stokely Carmichael seems "irrational" to white radicals, then his irrationality is merely the corollary of the outrageous irrationality of the system itself. But it is more than this, it is the rational outcome of the system's own irrationality, and therein lies the key to understanding (and supporting) the black power movement as an essential part of the dialectic of liberation. There is an uncomfortable truth about much of what Carmichael is saying (apparently he caused quite a stir at the conference) and many white radicals cannot take it. (A similar reaction can be observed amongst whites who listen to aboriginal militant Paul Coe). While we should not, in our guilt, concede to a new form of racism, nor should we fail to recognise the racial dimension in the struggle for the liberation of us all. Despite the brilliance of his oratory and his insights into the racial problem, one can detect in the speech the seeds of a failure to recognise anything other than racial conflict which led to Carmichael's demise in the American movement and his resignation from the Black Panther Party.10

Moving into the realm of the philosophical, we have two excellent papers by Lucien Goldmann and Herbert Marcuse. In "Criticism and Dogmatism in Literature", Goldmann has not over much to say about literature as such, but an important amount on the problems of consciousness and knowledge. Basing himself on the present level of economic development and the critique of modern capitalism set out by Marcuse in One Dimensional Man Goldmann argues strongly that

... the problem of attaining consciousness and of giving it expression has today assumed an importance that is decisive — or at any rate decisive in a different way than it was, say, at the time when Marx elaborated his theoretical thought (p. 129).

9 If one is to believe even some of what Ralph Ellison is saying in Invisible Man (Penguin, 1965) then past relations between black and white revolutionaries in the US were a little sick, to say the least.

In some ways, he is restating in modern terms what Lenin was talking about in *What is To Be Done*. After the past decades of economism (in the true sense in which Lenin used it, i.e. the failure to inject a political consciousness into the working class by subservience to the spontaneous movements of the class) this is timely enough, but Goldmann does more than this. His analysis of modern capitalism and the particular need for consciousness today is well worth reading.

Goldmann's second theme is the structure of knowledge in which he makes an interesting summary of dialectical epistemology, comparing it with Freud's *libido* theory of cultural creation. Finally, his section on Criticism and Dogmatism is also worth the effort needed to understand it, particularly where he formulates the relation between criticism and dogmatism.

In "Liberation from the Affluent Society" Herbert Marcuse achieves one of his best summaries of his own theories. His incisive analysis of repression in the advanced west and the possible alternatives to it, provides a philosophical basis for a renewed theoretical attack on capitalism and capitalist ideology. Marcuse is especially worth reading for his precise formulations of problems and solutions. For instance, he states very well the need for capitalism to increasingly protect itself against the revolutionary possibilities by formal and informal repression.

I think we are faced with a situation in which this advanced capitalist society has reached a point where quantitative change can technically be turned into qualitative change, into authentic liberation. And it is precisely against this truly fatal possibility that the affluent society, advanced capitalism, is mobilised and organised on all fronts, at home as well as abroad. (pp. 179-180).

This concept of neo-capitalism being "mobilised against the possibilities" is extremely important, and its propagation in a form understandable to the masses is a necessity for the full exposure of capitalist society. Marcuse seems to have slightly modified some of his views about the role of intellectuals in the revolution. Certainly, one cannot disagree with his statements that the revolutionary intellectuals must see themselves as educators and initiators. He correctly hits out at the opposite yet related illnesses which afflict revolutionaries:

Our role as intellectuals is a limited role. On no account should we succumb to any illusions. But even worse than this is to succumb to the widespread defeatism which we witness. (p. 191). 11

Finally, in "Beyond Words", David Cooper discusses problems as a basis for planning actions. His discussion of the individual identity in its relation

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11 It should be said in passing that the accusations from certain dogmatic quarters that Marcuse is a CIA spy and provocateur, or something akin to it, should be nailed once and for all for their absurdity. This story was started in US Maoist circles and taken up in various groups around the world. At one stage it was even raised by the opposition within the CPA as an "argument". It is always possible, of course, that Marcuse is a CIA agent (it is always possible that anyone might be — if you use criteria such as the number of revolutionaries murdered, Stalin could be the world's leading contender) but, if so, then he is being paid by the wrong organisation. For the fact of the matter is that the content of Marcuse's writings is profoundly revolutionary in all senses of the term and it is precisely the content which the dogmatists do not attempt to criticise, because they cannot.
to politics stems from the existentialist school and is an aspect of politics that deserves far more study.

The Dialectics of Liberation is a truly revolutionary book and is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the roots of revolution in our society. Rarely in the space of two hundred pages will one find such a comprehensive yet penetrating analysis of all aspects of our contemporary sickness and the possibilities for an alternative. My major criticism of the book is that, whereas it lays bare the diseased structure of world society (that is: poses the problem) in a way which few can match, it fails to attempt an outline of a solution I do not mean by this calls to action, immediate programs, etc. (although we could do with some of these, too) but rather an attempt to perceive what social forces are likely to move when and how and where in response to the contradictions whose existence the various authors so ably demonstrate.12

For this is the great problem which the revolution faces, the huge obstacle which blocks the path of the dialectic: although the left's understanding of society and its ills is not good enough and must be improved, it is still miles ahead of the vast masses of mankind — so far, in fact, that the difference is frightening. How to expand the consciousness of mankind, particularly that part of it in the west, is the key task before us. Praxis is just as crucial an element in the dialectic as theory, and if theory is poverty-stricken, praxis is more so, partly due to the opting out of many who regard themselves as "theorists". The activists must get some theory and the philosophers must leap out of their defeatist armchairs (even if it is only to a desk to write a good book) for nothing less than the future of man and his planet is at stake. Those who react to this as a mere cliche should read the book.

Finally, to return to my original theme. The Dialectics of Liberation opens up new avenues of thought for revolutionary theory, and at the same time provides a genuine alternative to bourgeois sociology. It is no accident that so many of those who contributed to this critique are themselves social scientists, but social scientists who have sharp differences with many of their colleagues. Only by a full understanding of all the issues, not by off the cuff dismissals, can one develop a revolutionary social science and, hence, make a revolution. There is a bourgeois sociology and books such as this help to expose its inadequacies. Equally, there are those revolutionaries who do not understand and therefore cannot distinguish what is bourgeois and what is not in social science. They are as much a problem in the dialectic of liberation as the "bourgeois" sociologists they pretend to criticise.

Brian Aarons


IT IS NOW BECOMING increasingly fashionable amongst members of the Australian New Left to deride "dry, old marxists" whilst making complimentary grunts about the brilliance of such doyens of the Yippie Left as Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffmann. The persons who express such views, as

12 Of all the authors, Gerassi is the only one to raise the need for genuinely revolutionary organisation, free from the Stalinism of the past.
well as being largely unfamiliar with the work of the classical Marxists they
so easily dismiss, are also unaware of the important contributions made by
more contemporary Marxist scholars. This collection of essays, far from being
dry or non-eclectic in the range of subject it discusses, deserves study, not only
by the members of the New Left, but by those more of Baran's generation.

In a country like Australia, where most of the self-styled "Marxists" abrogate
the responsibility of such a name-tag to undertake a serious study of economics
and economic history — subjects which Marx hardly ignored — Marxist intel­
lectuals like Baran are little read and even less understood. Baran clearly
believed that one of the most important advantages of the Marxian approach
is its breadth of vision; this is indicated by the inclusion of essays on such
differentiated topics as "Marxism and Psycho-Analysis" and "The Commit­
ment of the Intellectual". Yet he was by training and inclination an economist,
and it was his application of a Marxian approach to this discipline that
enabled him to make contributions to economics in general and to Marxism
in particular.

Writing in the early 1950's when the problems of economic development were
just beginning to again capture the attention of economists, Baran drew atten­
tion to the need to consider political and other types of barriers to development
when studying the problems of Third World countries. He particularly
stressed the need to consider the economic effects of imperialism and neo­
colonialism on these countries' development prospects and performances. Now
that it is quite fashionable to use Baran type arguments about development, and
whilst one should not underplay his contributions in this field, necessary
criticism of Baran must be made.

Baran's discussions of the Soviet Union and China, although sheltered some­
what by the passage of time, are far from impressive. His superficial analysis
of the Soviet Union, which results in predictions of continuing liberalization,
has been belied by events. His insistence that China is following a similar
path towards socialism as that followed by the Soviet Union does not stand
up to the facts. The Chinese have not abandoned an attempt to organize a
society largely on moral as distinct from material incentives, as Lenin so
hastily did; they have not waited until China is industrialized before attempting
to decentralize and democratize planning decisions, thereby disproving Baran's
assertion that planning can't be so modified until after industrialization has
been accomplished; and finally, the Chinese are no longer placing major
emphasis on capital — intensive techniques of production — they are most
sensibly using their greatest resource, labour, in an intensive fashion.

More specific criticisms of technical aspects of some of the essays could be
made, but for the non-economist reader it is more important to discuss Baran's
general approach to Marxian economics and his relevance to current debates
in the Western and Communist world about economics as a discipline. Baran
and others of his genre and generation, for example Paul Sweezy and Maurice
Dobb, while they were not placed by geography in a Stalinist straight-jacket
of economic orthodoxy and vehement opposition to the use of mathematics in
economics, nevertheless failed to develop significantly the techniques of analysis
contained in the Marxian approach. As political economists they tended to
concentrate largely on more general problems — though some of Dobb's later
work is an exception — to the detriment of the fulfilment of the utility
contained in Marxian economics when applied to more specific problems.
In fact the utilization of hints left by Marx by the more perceptive orthodox economists has done the greatest service to Marxian economics; the majority of Marxist scholars were too unprepared to modify Marx's original structures, even if all the evidence pointed to their incorrectness or unsuitability to more advanced stages of capitalism. Without doubt the best example of this myopic use of Marxian economics was the painful attempt, and a basically fruitless and useless attempt it proved to be, to base Soviet investment policy on the labour theory of value. After decades of ideological wrangling this attempt has for all effective purposes been abandoned, and bourgeois tools are now being applied. One wonders what Marx would have thought of this use of this theory to plan a socialist society when he had used it as a vital theoretical base for his analysis of the development of capitalism. The political economy of socialism has a long way to go before it reaches the sophistication Marx achieved in his analysis of capitalism. It is to Baran's discredit that he did not see the failures of the Soviet economists in particular and confined himself to problems involving Western capitalism and imperialism. Western Marxist scholars had a responsibility towards the Soviet Union, but most, including Baran, preferred to follow Stalinist orthodoxy or were blinded ideologically by it. Marxian economics, as well as Soviet economic development, were restricted by these pressures.

It is also important to relate Baran's work with the growing controversies about the scope of economics courses in Western universities; these debates have now begun in some of the Australian universities and, unfortunately, have got off to a bad start. Like Stalin, many radical critics of economics are violently opposed to mathematical techniques in economics and want them removed from economics courses. But Marx realized the value of such techniques and felt strongly his inadequacies in this area. To be an effective critic of orthodox economics one has to be able to understand fully the work of such economists. Baran, in one of these essays stresses that mathematics does have a function, and the radical critics should not only take up some of his attacks on orthodox economics — and there is no sign yet in Australia of classical Marxist attacks being launched — but must also not fall into the anti-intellectual position of being anti all mathematics as such. When the demand amongst even the US radical critics is for economics to revert to a crude form of positivism, Baran has still much to offer to these debates.

Moreover, if one is to understand the latest developments in the socialist countries one also has to have a basic understanding of mathematics. Castro, realizing that the Soviet economists had little to offer, recently issued an invitation to a top Harvard professor to draw up a plan for the development of the entire Isle of Pines. Interesting work is also commencing in the US, which involves using econometric techniques to study poverty and depressed groups. Marxists must not oppose mathematical techniques in economics, even if by doing so this appears the easiest way to get mass support. In sum, Baran type critiques must be made but the attack on orthodox economics must not stop there. Baran and others like him are of little value if you wish to become a constructive critic of bourgeois economics; their only value is to point you in the right direction. Marx was only such a brilliant critic of classical political economy because he made such a tremendous effort to firstly master it. His approach must also be applied to attacking the orthodoxy of our time.

How does this collection of essays by a "dry, old Marxist" compare with
the analytical works of the father of the Yippies, Jerry Rubin, which are now being so widely read by most sections of the Left? When one attempts such a comparison, one is left feeling very despondent about the future of the Western Left if Rubin and his cohorts are to continue to dominate. At least the Marxists had an idea of what they were fighting, although it tended to be a crude and vulgar understanding of contemporary capitalism. Rubin obviously has no real idea of his enemy's structure and hence his strategies remain Yippie yells and TV appearances.

Baran, unlike many of the heroes of the New Left was able to rise above the crassness and anti-intellectualism of his society, and thus his example remains an important one. Reading these essays one is also reminded of the absence of persons of the intellectual calibre of Baran within the Australian Left. The current obsession with the younger and the circumventing of Marx's more important contributions in the field of political economy, has reduced interest in the type of work Baran did. These essays, despite their limitations, are at least in the broad Marxian tradition of directing attention to the importance of economic factors. The study of the so-called "counter-culture" and other sometimes vague aspects of contemporary capitalism, whilst of undeniable value, must not misdirect attention away from the areas in which Baran spent so much of his life-time and which remain so crucial if one is to comprehend the dynamics of monopoly capitalism.

Dave Clark

A NEW BRITANNIA, by Humphrey McQueen.
Penguin, 261pp., $1.50.

THE AUSTRALIAN NEW LEFT: Critical Essays and Strategy,
Ed. Richard Gordon.
Heinemann, 304pp., $1.75.

"THE PAST BELONGS TO THE ENEMY" according to Humphrey McQueen, and if the intellectual and emotional maturity of the two books under review were in any way representative of the Australian Left, so would the future. But, of course they are not representative. The book on the New Left should have been sub-titled "Studies from a Dying Sub-Culture". One is not exactly surprised to find that most of the contributors have changed their views a good deal since they composed their pieces. McQueen has not — he reproduces his peroration in the New Left collection almost word for word in the Penguin. He must have thought it was pretty good. And so it was, if you did not already know what the real temper and value systems of the average Australian were last century. There were several ways of knowing this. One was by being reasonably *au fait* with the Australian working class, which has changed very little in the last seventy years. Another was by possessing a passing acquaintance with research done as long ago as ten years before the appearance of this miscellany of other people's labours.

The author in a way prepared us for all of this by saying (p. 11) "There is hardly any original research here". However, he goes on to add: "there are a host of new facts". There is nothing of the kind. There are very few new facts indeed. Most of the new interpretations which McQueen defines as a species of fact — and on which he bases the coherent parts of his anti-lower class diatribe
— can be found in the B.A. Honours thesis of a colleague of mine, Dr. John Dalton. This thesis, produced when the two were studying at the University of Queensland, provoked considerable discussion at the time (1961). Although certainly well-known to the author, for some inscrutable reason no acknowledgement of this important source appears in the quite extensive bibliography.

Anyone who wishes to examine the kernel of McQueen's creation should either read the B.A. Honours thesis itself, or else Chapter I of Prelude to Power, edited by Murphy, Joyce and Hughes, and published by Jacaranda Press. Chapter I is a brief summary of the 1961 Dalton thesis. But Dalton's work is analytic and descriptive, quite free of the absurd posturings and ingrained illiberality of the New Britannia, elements which we have come to recognise as the trademarks of the bulk of recent New Left performances. For serious students the Dalton thesis is infinitely preferable to this tribute to Nikolai Ivanovitch Lobachevsky.

When I picked up the New Britannia I suppose I expected some sort of socio-political history of the Australian people, and of the growth of the infant society until the First War. This didn't happen. The story is one-dimensionally political; for the rest there are numerous attacks on labour historians, mostly missing their mark, complaints that there wasn't a proletariat before it was historically possible for one to exist, a repetition of the Fear of the North stories (which most readers had got straight before this), a dearth of supporting statistics and secondary sources, and a misuse or misunderstanding of some of the sources quoted. And pomposities such as "Australia was a frontier of White Capitalism" (p. 17). This to replace other theories supposedly advanced previously.

Of course Australia was white! And though it did not start capitalist — for obvious reasons — it became so. But most countries do, and last century's all did, if they were allowed. A frontier? Looking which way? Antarctica? Or the Dutch East Indies and all the other colonial countries with which the Continent had such fragmentary relations? The only country we were influenced by during this period was Britain — but McQueen frequently ignores this. The "frontier of white capitalism" thesis is announced as the alternative to the domestic frontier thesis favoured by previous Australian historians. We can thereby re-locate "Australia in the mainstream of world development", and "only in this way would it be possible to understand the nature of our radicalism or of our nationalism". In fact, there is nothing shown about us being in the mainstream of world development, probably because we weren't. And once the Kanakas, the Aborigines and the Chinese are related, in very predictable ways to the racist components of antipodean national-radicalism, there is naught to do but to revert to the domestic frontier thesis. Which is perhaps why McQueen describes his chronicle as remaining "encapsuled within the tradition it so violently denounces".

The first serious criticism McQueen makes of labour historians concerns their absorption in the game of "hunt the proletariat" in 19th century Australia. There wasn't one, as he says. He then substitutes "hunt the socialist". The book is studded with complaints that there weren't any, or that X wasn't really one, or that Y was a racist socialist. (Like Jack London?) But where did a good marxist expect all the socialists to come from, until the development of industry? There were some; disputatious little sects, far removed from social reality. We still have their successors.
But this judging Australian people by impossible criteria — they weren't proles, they weren't socialists, so what use were they?; leads to a patronising and at times inhuman approach. The new settlers are accused of materialism and petit bourgeois aspirations, or else of being professional criminals. The story of Wood, and Russel Ward, that the convicts were victims of social, legal and political oppression and that they contribute much to the traditions of lower class solidarity — is angrily dismissed. No, they were lumpen proletariat or petit bourgeois. It was "the desire for self-improvement which had led to most of the convicts being transported in the first place." (p.127). Evidence? The great majority were professional criminals. Definition of professional criminal? None, unless it is having committed a number of offences and living by what the late 18th and early 19th century legislators defined as criminal means. Is this a description of a criminal, a bourgeois, a lumpen proletariat, or a victim?

When one remembers that there were nearly 200 offences punishable by death in the late 18th century; that St. Thomas says that a man has a right to steal if he can't find bread for his family, that most of these crimes would now be punishable by a fine or a short sentence, that once a man had committed one crime he was normally drawn inexorably into others, one can only marvel at the inhumanity of all this. If stealing to live was a desire for self-improvement, then I suppose the London poor were petit bourgeois, as hosts of people in Asia, Africa and Latin America are petit bourgeois.

This re-writing of British social history (not Australian) reads like the opinions of a Regency judge, or else an ex-prole kicking the ladder away in his quest for self-improvement. McQueen is equally insensitive on early attitudes to authority possessed by the new settlers. Their outlook was lumpen prole or petit bourgeois — "both classes can be described as independent people... who hate officiousness and authority, especially when these qualities are embodied in military officers and policemen". "Such an attitude is essentially bourgeois in origin and content and... well suited to the classe small proprietors, dispossessed labourers and professional criminals who made up the bulk of the convicts and had shown their active acceptance of the ideology of capitalism — individual acquisitiveness." (pp.126-7, italics added).

I have only quoted this tedious drivel at such length because it is so revealing. So dislike of officiousness and authority as embodied by the police and army is essentially bourgeois in origin, is it? Let all the revolutionaries and social rebels of America — North and South — of Asia and Africa, of Italy and France, heed the words of this revolutionary writer. And of course, the English and Irish poor should have appreciated their police and military, instead of seeing them as instruments of the ruling classes. And I've never heard the hunted wretches of the London stews described as independent people before. It's as though all the criminologists, penal reformers and social analysts from Beccaria and Henry Fielding onwards, had never written, and Simon Legree were still King. At least our social casualties know what to expect when the self-appointed vanguard of the proletariat takes over.

And if one has read Solzhenitzyn's accounts of all these petit bourgeois acquisitors in the Stalinist camps, busily improving themselves by stealing things, hiding things, dreaming of a little place where they could at last be alone, and free, one will recognise in a flash what bourgeois they were. For
one thing, they hated the Stalinist police and the army. Demonstrators take note.

From a marxist standpoint, or from the point of view of a Fifth Former doing a Clear Thinking course, a great deal of McQueen's writing is of the purest of pure gibberish. So the "ideology of capitalism" is "individual acquisitiveness"? Probably. But so it is part of the ideology of farmers and cultivators right down from Sumerian times. Are they capitalists, too? Individual acquisitiveness was a pretty strong motive for slave owners, feudal lords, members of guilds, whether they be masters or journeymen. The Church dignitaries didn't get a very good press for the same reason. So were they all capitalists? This makes nonsense of just about all of Marx's distinctions between different stages in social evolution, the differing class structures and the changing ideologies which stemmed from them. Being personally acquisitive is neither a necessary nor a sufficient criterion of being an active acceptor of the ideology of capitalism.

How did McQueen come to perpetrate this Double Dutch? At one level, straight intellectual incompetence. If A possesses quality X, and B possesses quality X, then A and B are the same. Thus a dog is really an elephant. Another gem-like mode of reasoning — if A possesses a resemblance to B, and B possesses a resemblance to C, then A resembles C. Better still, A is C — really. (That word "really" has to do a lot of work for the lumpen marxist philosopher). And thus, if A has a withered arm, and B has a withered arm, and B and C each has a cauliflower ear, A resembles C. In fact, is the same — really.

And, by using illogical convolutions of this kind, you can call the same person a bourgeois, a petit bourgeois or a lumpen proletariat, as your fancy takes you. You can even call someone a lumpen proletarian before there is a proletariat. And this enables you to abuse him without either describing or explaining him. For description and explanation rest upon the making of distinctions. There are few viable distinctions in this book, any more than there are in its companion volume.

And this brings me to another piece of McQueen misanthropy towards the lower orders. This revolves around the land question and the people who wanted to take up land. The author doesn't like big landowners, small landowners, or co-ops of people working their own farms. Presumably, there should have been kolkhozes. And the desire of new settlers to get out of the only kinds of city jobs then available, viz. working on the roads, as members of the servant class, or toiling in the early backyard factories; out, into the bush, to stand on their own feet, without a bloody boss — this is evidence of materialism, apparently.

Such judgments come straight from the "rural idiocy" attitudes of Marx towards agriculture, which doesn't make them any the less fallacious. Communists have wasted decades trying to beat love of the soil out of their farmers, especially the idea that "land is a good thing in itself". But so it is; not at all like a machine, or a car. Land is part of nature, a living thing — and the love which men have always lavished on it is basically a creative matter. To grow something where nothing was before, and protect it while it grows; to turn a desert into a garden; to plant trees and put up fences; to beat the elements by putting in dams — are all forms of very primary creativity, as psychologists have always known. The Israelis and Yugoslavs know this, too — as they recognise the importance of people owning some part of this great organism which is so totally dissimilar to a mine, a shop or an assembly line.
Farmers who want the best price they can get for their work are no different from workers or academics, who want the same. Partly for material reasons — of course — but partly because this puts a value (not a price) on their work. A mark of status, if you like. And just as marxists complain about workers being robbed of part of the fruits of their labour, so are farmers.

The further question, how to organise farming (and industry) for the common good of all, is a separate one. It is a political and an economic question — but also a psychological one. Thus, the present tragedy unfolding in our farming — where, apparently, great numbers of people are to be forced off the land, from places where they've always lived and want always to live, from the only jobs they've ever known, into some rotten little suburb, due to market factors which they don't understand — this social tragedy is no different from the driving of miners, shipbuilders and craftsmen from areas and working communities where they've grown and derived their social meaning. Economically necessary, perhaps, but tragic. But the left philistines still don't see this — "serves them right for being materialist" they say. The sooner we all pile into great swollen cities, spend our days at endless assembly lines, and our nights in one of the million of little boxes we call homes, the better. This is progress.

I can understand 19th century capitalists and 20th century real estate speculators reasoning thus, but it has been a great misfortune that theorists on the left have talked this way, too. We didn't get our Revolution this way, only Megopolis, and a new, alienated Right — and waving the magic wand of workers' control — for it is not a worked-out analysis or program yet, only a magic wand — doesn't really help.

It was a far, far better thing to get out into the bush last century; digging roads, serving in shops and waiting on tables, toiling in sweat shops, didn't make socialists, nor was it a mark of disinterest in money. Usually, it was a preference for town life, a disinclination to take on a lifetime of back-breaking work in a harsh climate, with every chance of finishing up as broke as when you started.

One persistent feature of both books under review is the constant employment of terms like "liberal", "democratic", "bourgeois", "nationalist", "fascist", without any serious attempt to provide proper, i.e. workable definitions. McQueen does set out a set of criteria for fascism (p. 116). Taken, as usual, from somebody else, and applied to Lawson, they are —

1. an organic concept of the nation;
2. idealisation of manly virtues:
3. hostility to finance capitalism;
4. elitist notion of leadership;
5. racism, including anti-semitism;
6. militarism.

Although, so far as I am concerned, no completely satisfactory account of anti-semitism has yet appeared, it seems a mistake to lump it with racism per se. For one thing, it lets many fascists who are not anti-semites — overtly — off the hook. When you subtract anti-semitism, you find yourself with a whole collection of movements who satisfy these criteria. Thus, many Black Power people answer these criteria. And so do many people who are going around saying they are leftists. For them idealisation of manly virtues is expressed in
the form of the exhortation of violence for its own sake, and indulgence in
never-ending fantasies of violence. These fantasies gradually take over more
and more parts of their mental and verbal life. I stress verbal — for most of
the violence remains in the realm of fantasy. The ones who will have to do
the fighting, as usual, are the workers, under the guidance of “men from other
classes” (A New Britannia, p. 236). As McQueen says (p. 235-6) “Whenever the
marshal’s baton has rested in the workers’ horny hand, the army of
workers has had a leadership less sure and less satisfactory for its purposes
than when the leadership has been in the hands of men from other classes
of society.” The workers are cast for the same role as Boxer in Animal Farm.

Nevertheless, their manly virtues are idealised. Just as the defective Whites
idealised the male Negro, the German petit bourgeois the young, athletic Ger­
man male, so do our chair-borne commandos idealise the Australian male
worker. Same explanation in each case. The same ambivalence. The same
patronage — and fear.

In other words, our nomenclature is at the crossroads. Just as the psychologists
who produced the extremely important notion of the authoritarian personality
found that their original criteria pulled in the right authoritarians but left
out the left equivalents — so are we floundering around with a vague notion
like Stalinist to explain the elitist organicists whose endless preoccupation with
putsches, conspiracies, character assassination as a reluctant substitute for
literal murder, marks them off tactically, ideologically and psychologically,
from the genuine left. Their desistance from militarism is simply a matter
of context — they must perforce operate within a domestic political society —
so the temptation can’t arise. Militarism can be attacked as an aspect of the
State — this State. But there are domestic versions of militarism which they
do embrace.

So, using McQueen’s borrowed definition, with the amendment mentioned
before, we have the solution as to how to define the left authoritarian mis­
anthropes who devote 90 per cent of their energies and fantasies to attacking
the left. The definition to be applied to this segment is — Left Fascist.

The Australian New Left: Critical Essays and Strategy, is a different kettle
of fish. There are some good pieces in it, though mainly from the older and
better qualified contributors. Dan O’Neill has a sensitive and extremely modest
essay, which repays re-reading, despite its mistakes; Bruce McFarlane’s essay on
“challenging the control of the Australian economy” is thorough, and gets
down to tin-tacks very quickly. Denis Altman’s impressionistic study on the
Electric Age is well done, although, as with all impressionistic efforts, there are
things with which one would want to disagree. He obviously irritated some
other New Left pundits, and two short and thoroughly unconvincing chapters
are devoted to refuting some of his points. These chapters could have been
better devoted to criticising some of the other huge, shapeless areas of political
free association appearing under names like Osmond, Summy and so on.

The point is, Altman can write careful non-impressionistic pieces and has
done so. If non-impressionism was not favoured, then it should not have
been included. But having included it, there should have been no further
complaint on that score. In any case, impressionism is preferable to free
association and tedious name dropping. Some of these interminable essays
are riddled with O.K. left names — Perry Anderson, Blackburn, Mailer, Gramsci,
Fanon, Marcuse, etc. etc. etc. — partly as evidence of wide reading and radical respectability on the writers' parts — but just as often as bromides to sedate the critical reader in the presence of a fragmentary or especially shoddy piece of argumentation. Yet most of the people whose names are cast around like Holy Water have usually reasoned in a systematic and multi-dimensional manner, and their writings have been largely free of the ridiculous presumptions and intellectual buffoonery which dominate the approach of so many of these Australian symposiasts. There are too many examples of scamped work and waste of good materials in this collection.

Promises to refute liberalism and demonstrate its failures are made, but not kept. The same applies to parliamentary democracy and the ALP. Similarly with announcements that new workable strategies and compendia of tactics are to be provided. Dan O'Neill, with his essay, "Abstract and Real Worlds: Intellectuals and Radical Social Change," actually comes to grips with these matters, and finishes with conclusions of agnosticism and empiricism.

But for the rest, the living, working example of Berkeley is evoked — but whatever did happen to Berkeley? The French students are marched in and out, like a stage army, when half of the cast are on strike. Osmond calls for immediate action at all points at once, but especially around university administration buildings — storm the toilet blocks, comrades! Others speak of developing a new revolutionary life style p. 253 which probably takes some time. Osmond says that "out of political practice, out of tactics, a socialist strategy will dialectically emerge". This licence for never-ending bulldust under the protective wing of the God-Dialectic, raises the question as to how many armies have won a campaign by making their tactics up as they went along, and finding the strategy at the end? Especially when most of the officers come straight out of the Cadet Corps? A confession of intellectual bankruptcy.

Most of the discussions about tactics are incompetent; one or two are quite seamy. There are virtually no coherent statements of ultimate goals, except of such generality as to secure widespread and confused assent. But one thing is certain "there is a need of iconoclastic and symbolic acts, and the need to inject the maximum amount of cultural and social tension into the society" (Peter O'Brien, p. 253). These, of course, were the Nazi tactics, before their revolution. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery: therefore, "the New Left must also accept all forms of revolutionary practice as prima facie authentic until proved otherwise". — O'Brien. (What counts as proof?). The old, old fallacy of mistaking militancy in tactics for basic radicalism is endlessly repeated in this book. When people, despite objections, keep equating the two, then we must conclude that that is all they do mean by radicalism or the revolution. Which explains the paucity of detail about the character of post-revolutionary society, and the short weight delivered on strategy.

One or two reproduce the Narodnik project of "going to the people", i.e. talking to the peasants (p. 259). Others speak of the New Left acting as social detonators. All right, I suppose, if you knew anything about explosives. Summy, after pouring cold water on coalition strategies (requires an ability to get on with people), speaks of the need to penetrate various organisations with a view to taking them over by stealth. This, one remembers, was the old-style CP scenario. Who are the cynics and manipulators now?

One thing the younger New Left contributors all agree upon is that the
students are the hope of the world, the vanguard of the revolution. As Osmond says "it is the vanguard or leading element of a class that does not yet exist" p.216. The Australian New Left would seem to match up to Freud's definition of Life: a raft of pain in a sea of indifference.

The key role of student leaders probably accounts for the great hurry — hurry to revolt, to rush into print, to pronounce on matters clearly beyond their intellectual competence, as demonstrated in this collection. Because what happens when you cease to be a student? Do you go back into the rearguard? Someone once asked me what happened to old students when they died. The answer — they move and start yet another course at yet another university. Please, please, come the revolution!

To conclude: these two books are similar in some ways, different in others. In both, the good bits aren't original and the original bits aren't good. Stylistically, they are very different. McQueen writes well: fluently, sometimes wittily — with all the glib demagoguery of a Richmond auctioneer or a racing columnist. No wonder the right wing press liked it — for underneath all this chatter is a turgid pool of profound antipathy towards the lower classes. This doesn't magically cut out at 1914, but is a permanent aversion. And the same goes for the rest of the human race. You will search in vain for the human face of socialism; instead, you are shown its reverse — if you follow. The New Britannia is to be replaced by the New Siberia.

The second book is different. Atrociously written, for the most part, it nevertheless qualifies as a species of that respectable genre — Utopian Socialism. Not that the intellectual standard in any way compares with the original Utopian Socialists whom Marx castigated for lack of rigor, and for wishful thinking.

Nearly everybody, after spreading himself over fifty or more pages, insists that "some of the ideas have not been fully developed: the form is more like an outline than a substantiated argument". Or "strategies are constructed from certain preconceptions about socio-political reality which, for reasons of space, cannot be defended — only briefly stated". Like Anatole France's painter who spent his whole life looking for a canvas large enough to contain his proposed masterpiece. Result, no painting, but a whole life spent in talking about the masterpiece to come. Nothing has changed since these essays were thrown together. Nor will it.

All that will change eventually will be the name of the dilettantes' association. As a very early member of the British New Left (circa 1959), and with fond memories and a good deal of respect for what was attempted and done by a far more serious and mature group, might I suggest an early change of title, with of course, the customary continental flavour? What about the Anatole France Lemmings' League; alternatively the Barber's Cat Self-Improvement Society?

I imagine that the phenomenon of student radicalism expressed in this particular narcissistic form, will persist for some time. It constitutes a branch of social-climbing for some; a way of shortening the path to temporary intellectual eminence to others; a lonely hearts society and a substitute for serious wide-ranging analysis for everyone.

Max Teichmann
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